A Dissertation

entitled

A Case Study of an Upward Bound Program Director at a Midwestern University

by

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The TRIO Upward Bound program has been in existence for 50 years. The program is a federally funded pre-college program which supports the persistence and retention of low-income, potential first-generation students as they prepare for college. The TRIO programs have assisted thousands of students in their preparation and transition to higher education. Today, the program has been under constant threats of facing funding cuts or the program being eliminated altogether. This has made the job as director more difficult as one must provide services to students while the Department of Education is requiring more and more objectives needing to be reached with less funding. This dissertation is a case study of a program in Michigan where it examines a director in how she navigates through the constant program cuts and ever changing objectives to provide resources, facilities and programming to help students to reach the goal of graduating from a four-year university with a baccalaureate degree. Eight current and former Upward Bound students within the program, along with a college administrator and director took part in interviews in 2014 to provide data in how the director has managed the program in the past 15 years. The results of the data showed 21 themes emerging from the study. There were six major themes that were essential in order for
students to be successful. The implication is that other programs could use the data gather in this study to create successful programs. In the study Kurt Lewin’s Authoritarian Leadership model could be used in other programs that may be set up in a similar fashion as the program in this study.
To my family for all of the support and guidance that you have provided during this process, you have believed in me when I did not believe in myself. To Brandi LaShelle Quinn, the most loving wife, friend, and confidant any man could hope for. To my children, Braniya LaShae Quinn and Anthony Braylin Quinn, II for your patience and love, I honestly could not have completed this project without you. To my mother JoAnn Harris Quinn for instilling the value of education, this one is especially for you. To my sister, Angela Quinn for her unique form of inspiration and my cousin, Lawrence Calvin Quinn, for undeniable direction and influence, I share this achievement with you. To my Aunts, Rosa Perry and Velma Lynn Mitchell, and Uncles, James, Sam and Herman Harris who were ever-present from my birth until this very moment cheering and encouraging me forward. I really appreciate it and love all of you.
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List of Abbreviations

COE............Council for Opportunities in Education

MAEOPP ......Midwest Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel
MI-CAPP ......Michigan College Access Programs and Personnel
MU ..............Middle Western University

OAEOPP .......Ohio Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel
SBP .............Summer Bridge Program
SES ..............Socioeconomic Status
SSS ..............Student Support Services

TRIO ..............The first three federal funded programs designed to assist low income families against barriers for higher education

UB ..............Upward Bound
Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter will introduce the issues that Upward Bound (UB) directors must encounter to prepare students of low socioeconomic status and first generation to graduate from a college/university in 2015. In this case study, the researcher will analyze the perceptions of key figures involved with one UB program in the state of Michigan. The individuals involved in this study will include the director, former students of the UB program, and administrators at the college and high school involved in the program, examining their perception of the director’s role in assisting low-income students’ ability to graduate with a baccalaureate degree within six years. This chapter is divided into 14 sections. The chapter will begin with a brief background discussing the creation of the Upward Bound program and current issues America is facing in student education. The next section will discuss the barriers to entry and to graduation from college for low income students. A brief description of the UB program will follow. The researcher will provide a statement of the problem, significance of the problem, conceptual framework, and purpose of the study. The latter portion of the chapter will consist of a section discussing the significance of the study, methodology, data collection, limitations of the study, and research subjectivity. The chapter will conclude with a definition section and a summary of the chapter.

Background of the Problem

In 1964, United States President Lyndon B. Baines Johnson’s War on Poverty program produced the Economic Opportunity Act (1964) which paved the way for the establishment of the UB. The UB, which opened its doors in 1965, is a pre-collegiate
program designed to assist low-income and first-generation students’ transition to and matriculation from post-secondary educational institutions (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). This federally funded program is designed to provide low-income, first-generation students with the skills, tools, and motivation integral to future success at the collegiate level (U.S. Department of Education). UB, one of the three original TRIO programs, is the oldest of the initial series of federally funded programs created in the 1960s (U.S. Department of Education). The two other programs established at that time include Talent Search (1965) and Student Support Services (1968).

After analyzing the relationship between poverty and education, President Lyndon B. Johnson stated, “poverty must not be a bar to learning, and learning must offer an escape from poverty” (Johnson, 1964, p. 705). Throughout the nation’s history, American leaders have reiterated that education is the only tool capable of ensuring liberation from poverty, ignorance, and inefficiency for the disenfranchised. Therefore, higher education is considered the gateway for American youth to supersede past generations’ accomplishments and quality of life. In fact, students’ matriculation through higher education improves not only their individual lives, but future generations via increased wages, healthier lifestyles, and global awareness (Decker, Rice, Moore & Rollefson, 1997; Oakes, Quartz, Ryan & Lipton, 2000; U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Additionally, the educated benefit the nation via a myriad of tangible and intangible contributions, including, but not limited to, their escape from an increasingly prominent criminal justice system that seems to ensnare many (Decker et al; Oakes et al; Policy and Program Studies). The benefits for a college graduate are immeasurable for his or her life
and family. Programs, such as UB, inform students of low socioeconomic status (SES) of the barriers they must overcome to enroll in and graduate from college.

**The Status of American Education.** It is projected that by the year 2042, America will become a majority minority nation. This projection will make educating low-income and first-generation students more critical than ever before (Roberts, 2008). TRIO programs could be a means of achieving the goal of educating the growing number of low-income and first-generation students. However, shifting economic realities mandate the nation invest in TRIO programs. In 2010 it was reported as shown in Figure 1. Canada ranked first in college completion rates among students age 25–34, while the United States fell from first to 12th of 26 countries (Hughes, 2012; Lee & Rawls, 2010).

![Figure 1. World college completion rates among students age 25–34.](image_url)

The urgency increases when examining low-income students’ success rate of college matriculation. The fastest growing population in the United States is Latino,
many of whom are low-income and/or first-generation (Svaldi, 2012). Kati Haycock, president of The Education Trust stated that, “what colleges do for students of color powerfully impacts the futures of these young people and that of our nation” (Gonzalez, 2010, para. 5).

**Barriers for Students of Low-Socioeconomic Status**

In 2011, low-income students are significantly less likely to graduate high school on time than their wealthier peers (Luhby, 2011). Figure 2 provides data from 2011 of several states located in the Midwest on high school graduation rates. In addition, the data illustrates how low-income students performed in several Midwestern states in 2011. Ohio and Michigan recorded approximately 65% and 63%, respectively, of low-income students’ graduating from high school on time (United States Department of Education, 2011). Ohio and Michigan, with the exception of Minnesota (58%), rank as the lowest states in graduating low-income students from high school (United States Department of Education). Ohio and Michigan numbers stand in stark contrast to South Dakota, where 85% of low-income students graduate high school (United States Department of Education). South Dakota was followed by Nebraska, Indiana, and Iowa, which graduates the same group from high school at 78%, 76% and 76% respectively (United States Department of Education). These numbers, especially in Ohio and Michigan, illustrate the need for a program such as UB. To achieve the country’s goal of 90% of all high school students graduate 2020 necessitate programs such as UB (Resmovits, 2013).
The Civil Rights Act (1964) significantly weakened institutionalized racial barriers previously barring African American admittance to Predominantly White Institution’s (PWI), as well as significantly altering the racial demographics of such institutions (Sissoko & Shiau, 2005). However, low-income students, including low-income African Americans, quickly discovered that admittance to PWIs was not synonymous with graduating from these institutions (Cabrera et al., 1999). Richard D. Kahlenberg, a senior fellow at the Century Foundation, has been called “the intellectual father of the economic integration movement” in K-12 education, and “arguably the nation’s chief proponent of class-based affirmative action in higher education admissions” (The Century Foundation, 2012, para. 1). Kahlenberg (2012) believed he
unveiled the hidden story in higher education and the great goal of many of these institutions, stating:

The dirty little secret of higher education, however, is that selective universities are more interested in admitting fairly affluent students of all colors than in promoting social mobility. In 2004, rich kids were found to outnumber poor kids on selective campuses by 25 to 1; on highly selective campuses, 86% of African American students are middle or upper class, and the white students are even richer. (para. 3)

Therefore, the country’s changing racial demographics have had little effect on students from families with lower socioeconomic status; however, legislation passed during the Johnson administration, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Higher Education Act of 1965, aided low-income families’ access to higher education. Despite the socioeconomic inequalities represented in college student populations and staggering number of students failing to graduate high school, President Obama put forth a goal during the early stages of his first term in office that by the year 2020, the United States would have the highest graduation rate in the world. Kahlenberg (2011) put forth three viable ways to reach this goal:

- Initiating a type of affirmative action plan to blend low-income and high income students more evenly among schools. The belief is that this will help more students succeed.
- Improving the education received before college. More parental involvements, better teachers, and sufficient funding to make this a reality are key components of this option.
• Improving programs like TRIO and Gear Up helping low-income students succeed in college. If these programs were given funding and support to reach more students and improve the work they are already doing, graduation rates may actually improve.

The Economic Opportunity Act (1964) led to the establishment of the first outreach program, UB, later known as part of TRIO. The UB led the way, assisting minorities, low-income, and first-generation students in accessing higher education institutions, previously off limits to these groups.

**What Obstacles Affect Low SES Status Students’ Ability to Pursue Higher Education.** As college degrees become increasingly essential for students in a globally competitive job market, it is critical to ascertain and evaluate obstacles and their effect on low-income students’ ability to graduate from higher educational institutions within six years. The cost of college and difficulty obtaining and repaying financial aid are increasingly larger burdens on families, adversely affecting qualified students’ enrollment (Zhao, 2010). In 2007, the net price for attending a four-year public college for low-income students was $10,620, which was 48% of family income (Zhao). That is roughly a $3,000 increase from the $7,570 net price in 1992, still 48% of family income (Zhao). Comparatively, costs increased for students from 22% to 26% of moderate family income, or $8,790 to $14,650, for a student to attend a four-year public college over the same period (Zhao). The Education Trust reports: “Due to flawed financial aid policies, students from middle-income families benefit more from higher education scholarship and grant programs than the low-income pupils the financial aid was designed to help” (as cited in Megna, 2011, para. 1).
Today, low-income families can expect to pay upwards of $11,000 yearly for tuition at a public or private university after receiving grants (Lynch, Engle & Cruz, 2011). Such costs are an undue burden for families of low socioeconomic status (Lynch et al.). Low-income families can expect to pay, often through loans, nearly three-fourths of their income to pay for one child to attend college (Lynch et al.). In contrast, middle income families pay 27% of household income, while high income families pay approximately 14% (Lynch et al.). Income disparity in the United States have resulted in educational opportunity inequity, limiting low-income students the most, as illustrated by student college enrollment comparisons from low, middle, and high-income families. College enrollment rate, presented in Table 1, shows low SES students lag far behind middle and higher income students in college enrollment.

### Table 1

**Enrollment Rates by Socioeconomic Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010 College Enrollment Rate</th>
<th>Immediate College Enrollment High Rate</th>
<th>Percentage of School Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Middle Income</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>High Income</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Enrollment Rates by socioeconomic status. This is breakdown of college enrollment rate by socioeconomic status from a report published by National Center for Education Statistics published in 2012. All values represent percentages from each socioeconomic group that graduated from high school.*

Student college enrollment from low-income families has increased from the previous generation; however, low-income students are still not graduating at the same rate as their wealthier classmates (Ramsey & Peale, 2010). With the increased representation of this demographic attending college, it is more pivotal now than before that programs, such as UB, continue to assist students with successful college
matriculation. The increase of low income students enrolling into institutions of higher education has led to the Department of Education to put forth more requirements on UB programs to ensure that not only students from this socio economic group enrolls into college, but are prepared to do college level work. New objectives have been implemented in 2012 to make programs more accountable for student learning outcomes such as, students completing a rigorous secondary school program of study, and reporting whether or not students are enrolled in developmental courses in college.

A college education is viewed by many as virtually the only pathway to middle income earnings in the United States (Carnevale & Strohl, 2011). In 1970, 74% of employees who had earned a high school degree or less were part of the middle class, which in modern dollars was estimated to be $30,000 to $85,000 (Carnevale & Strohl). However, in 2007, the 74% number had dropped to 39% (Carnevale & Strohl). In addition, during this period, individuals that earned a college degree remained in the middle class or became part of the upper class (Carnevale & Strohl). In the 2011 article entitled, College Graduation Rates: Income Really Matters. Income Inequality in American, claimed the gap between lower- and upper-income students graduating from college has increased (Luhby, 2011). In the study, data gathered from college graduates during the late 1990s and early 2000s indicated 54% of students from wealthy families, households earning more than $87,000 annually, completed college degrees by age 24 (Luhby). However, only nine percent of students from low socioeconomic households, earning less than $26,000 annually, completed their degrees by the same age (Luhby). The study echoes data from the late 1960s, showing graduation rates were 36% for students from wealthy families and five percent for students from low-income families.
Therefore, the gap between students’ ability to complete college degrees based on family economic status has increased drastically in the United States (Luhby). In the same study reviewing the 1970s and 1980s, Bailey illustrates high income students’ graduation rate continued to grow significantly, while low-income students’ graduate rate showed minimal growth (Luhby); furthermore, two-thirds of freshman from wealthy households finished degrees, while only one-third low-income household students completed degrees (Luhby). Low-income students are less likely to change socioeconomic status without a college degree (Luhby).

Many factors contribute to low-income students’ lagging behind peers. Families with higher socioeconomic status are more likely to afford to send their children to college than lower SES families (Luhby, 2011). Students of low SES are more likely to attend lower tier schools with larger class sizes (Luhby). In addition, SES students have no or limited financial assistance from parents and are more likely to face discouragement (Luhby). The result is that low-income families face a dilemma between what the family can afford and what is being charged by higher education institutions.

The digital divide has become another obstacle for low-income students succeeding in education. In an article entitled, *How Teachers Are Using Technology at Home and in Their Classrooms*, a survey conducted in early 2013 found a gap between low-income school districts compared to wealthier school districts. In the survey a reported 56% of teachers of low-income students stated that “a lack of resources among students to access digital technologies is a ‘major challenge’ to incorporating more digital tools into their teaching,” whereas 21% of teachers of wealthier students reported this problem (Purcell, Heaps, Buchanan, & Friedrich, 2013, para. 14). A reported 33% of
teachers of low-income students stated that school policies and rules on cell phone usage by students have a major impact on classroom instruction (Purcell, et al., para. 14). In comparison only 15% of teachers who instruct students from wealthier districts reported this finding. The issue of whether one has access to technology has morphed into an issue of how fast the connection is for students (Troianovki, 2013). How fast a home Internet connection is can be the difference in students completing class assignments for school (Troianovki). Students who lacked the fast connection at home find themselves visiting the local library or McDonald restaurant to complete assignments (Troianovki). A broadband connection costs on average $38 in major cities in the United States (Isaacson, 2013). However, in rural areas, which depends on satellite services, could pay in access $80 per month for Internet connection (Isaacson). It is the result and the lack of competition between Internet service, which in turn keeps connection prices high, have made regulators under the Obama Administration to make expanding broadband access a high priority (Isaacson; Troianovki). In order for students to become academically prepared they must be familiar with the ever changing technology of the 21st century.

Studies’ findings have consistently shown academic preparedness is a vital predictor of students’ college enrollment and graduation from an institution of higher education (Adelman, 1998; Alderman, 1999; Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000; Hossler, Schmitet, & Vesper, 1999; Perna & Titus, 2005; Stampen & Fenske, 1988; Strayhorn, 2011). According to Bettinger and Long (2005) nearly one-third of all students enrolling into higher education will require some type of college-preparatory course. Out of the one-third needing college-preparatory courses, a disproportional number are minorities, first-generation, and low-income students (Breneman, 1998; Strayhorn). Minorities, low-
income, and first-generation students will most often attend high schools that have limited resources, employ teachers less likely to focus on “rigorous, standards-based instruction,” are less likely to offer honors and advanced placement courses, and have limited availability in advanced math courses (McDonough & Fann, 2007; Orfield, 1998; Perna & Titus; Strayhorn, p. 143). Furthermore, college-preparatory courses result in wasted need-based grants, scholarships, and money for students and tax payers, according to the Alliance for Excellent Education, a Washington, D.C.-based policy group (Spak, 2011). In the 2007–08 academic year, remediation cost $5.6 billion in the United States; two billion of that in lost wages, as students enrolled in remedial courses are less likely to graduate (Spak). In the current economic depression, students must be prepared for college before starting college.

The Department of Education has increased accountability by requiring Upward Bound directors to meet more learning outcome goals and services provided (Duncan, 2011). One of the services the Department of Education want programs to implement is a financial literacy program for all projects. This was done in hopes that students can gain a better understanding about college price tags, financial aid, student loans, credit cards, grants and how mismanaging money as young students can have long term effects on their lives years later. As more programming and activities are suggested and required, the Department of Education has reduced funding for Upward Bound projects across the country (Duncan). Host institutions that received new grants in the new cycle (2012) are required to serve 60 students with the same budget serving 50 students five years ago. Programs are required to follow and report on students after they graduate from high school, informing the Department of Education of college enrollment, if enrolled in
college-preparatory courses, and of graduation. Meanwhile, directors must maintain staff morale and effectively meet the program’s objectives and students’ needs.

**The Upward Bound Program**

The purpose of TRIO programs is to provide low-income and first-generation collegians with the skills, tools, and motivation integral to future educational successes (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). In excess of 1,000 higher education institutions house the nation’s 2,812 TRIO programs, illuminating the path to higher education for 789,676 participants (Council for Opportunities in Education). Per the U.S. Department of Education (2012), UB goals include:

- Increasing low-income and first generation students’ graduation rates from secondary education;
- Increasing low-income and first generation students enrolling in post-secondary education; and
- Increasing low-income and first generation students’ matriculation from post-secondary education with a baccalaureate degree (United States Department of Education).

The creation of the UB program has provided many students the opportunity to become the first in their family to matriculate through higher education, obtaining the qualifications necessary for oft higher paying jobs to improve their lives, those of future generations in their family, and their communities.

In 2012–13, there were 826 UB programs in the United States and its territories (United States Department of Education, 2012). In Michigan alone, there were twenty-one UB programs servicing approximately 1,885 clients at a cost of $7,778,910 (Council
for Opportunities in Education, 2012). The numbers were slightly higher in Ohio. In Ohio, 2,213 students participated in UB programs, costing $9,551,199 (Council for Opportunities in Education). Nationally, the ethnic makeup, as illustrated in Figure 3, of students involved in TRIO programs is 37% Caucasian, 35% African Americans, 19% Latinos, four percent Native Americans, four percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and one percent other (Council for Opportunities in Education, 2012).

![Figure 3. Ethnic Breakdown of Students in TRIO Programs in the United States. This data came from the Council for Opportunities in Education that illustrates the ethnic makeup of participants in the various programs under the TRIO umbrella. Source: Council for Opportunities in Education, 2012.](attachment://figure3.jpg)

Although the program is diverse, the goal for all participating students is to graduate from a university or college within six years. In addition, there is still much work to be done addressing higher education’s accessibility for low-income students. In order to combat insufficient and diminishing resources and the digital divide facing
members of this group, colleges and universities have begun to institute several programs, such as college-preparatory courses to teach basic skills; reading, writing, and math labs; and summer bridge programs (Simpson, Hynd, Nist, & Burrell, 1997).

The purpose of UB is to combat educational inequities that minority, low-income and first-generation students’ encounter, to prepare students academically and socially for higher education, and to provide the resources necessary for success in higher education. Programs, such as UB, work under the supposition that students who participate in these pre-college programs are “better prepared and more likely to succeed in higher education than their peers who do not have such experiences” (Strayhorn, 2011, p. 144; Villalpando & Solorzano, 2005). TRIO programs in general operate to supplement classroom instruction (Swail & Perna, 2002); through participation in programs (i.e. UB), students are expected to improve skills in math and reading proficiency and to enroll into a college or university after graduation from high school (Strayhorn).

Mathematica Policy Research Inc. conducted a national evaluation of the UB Program for the United States Department of Education, measuring the effects of UB on student outcomes during the 1990s (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). The longitudinal evaluations consisted of a nationally represented sample from the programs applicants, assigned either to the UB group or to a control group (U.S. Department of Education). The 2000 study was the third follow up study of the UB program. The data informing the 2000 study is from the 1993 study that used 67 two- and four-year institutions, which hosted UB programs, and utilized base-line surveys about the student population who applied to the program (U.S. Department of Education). This study had a devastating impact on the UB programs nationwide because it resulted in an OMB
“ineffective rating” and was used by policy makers and politicians to “justify a zero funding requests for all of the federal pre-college programs in 2005 and 2006 (Cahalan and Goodwin, 2014). The study’s findings suggested that there was no detectable affect related to college enrollment, attendance or graduation on UB students who completed the program (Cahalan and Goodwin).

Although, a later study conducted by Cahalan and Goodwin (2014) that reviewed the findings of the previous mentioned study showed that one project, known as Project 69, was the only four-year university used in the strand (Cahalan and Goodwin). In addition, Project 69 lacked balance between the treatment and control group (Cahalan and Goodwin). The fact that one project had such an excessive amount of weight and that program, which had a number of negative outcomes, contributed to the fact that the institution was once a two year community college and had switched over to a four-year university, within that particular program had the impact of driving down the numbers in the outcomes (Cahalan and Goodwin). This was illustrated in the new study when they adjusted to the errors made from the previous study when it showed how faulty the data was in the study (Cahalan and Goodwin). Whereas, the former study could not detect a positive correlation between UB and college success, the current study did illustrate that there was a detectable effect from being in UB and college success (Cahalan and Goodwin). However, the previous study had a negative impact that is still apparent over a decade later because of the continual fight to show the program has merit and useful and trying to fight against the stigma of the earlier study.

Approximately 1,500 students were assigned to the UB group and 1,300 students were assigned to the control group (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Follow-up
surveys were conducted during 1994–95, 1996–97, and 1998–2000 (U.S. Department of Education). The program attempted to follow students from high school through college (U.S. Department of Education). However, the limited time frame did not present an opportunity for the majority of students to matriculate through higher education (U.S. Department of Education). Therefore, the focus was primarily on four areas: preparation for college, enrollment into a college or university, highest level of post-secondary education completed, and college progress (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). The response rates for the follow-up surveys were 97% in 1994–95, 86% in 1996–97, and 81% in 1998–2000 (U.S. Department of Education). The 2000 study’s findings showed:

- UB increased student enrollment into four year colleges/universities for participants who had a lower educational expectations;
- UB increased credit earned at four-year colleges/universities for participants who had lower educational expectations; and
- The study found that as a student’s length of time increased in the UB program the greater the improvement in student outcomes.

**Statement of the Problem**

As Figure 4. below illustrated 38% of low-income students will enroll into college straight from high school, while 81% of their high-income peers enroll (Council for Opportunities in Education, 2012).
Family socioeconomic status continues to be the strongest predictor of a student’s completion of a baccalaureate degree within six years. Nearly ten percent of students in the “lowest income quartile complete a degree within six years” (Svaldi, 2012, para 2). Students in higher socioeconomic status graduate at nearly 75% (Svaldi). Vincent Tinto, a distinguished professor of higher education at Syracuse University and Pell Institute Senior Scholar, states:

For too many low-income, first-generation students, the newly opened door to American higher education has been a revolving one. The unavoidable fact is that while college access has increased for this population, the opportunity to successfully earn a college degree, especially the four-year degree, has not. (Lederman, 2008)

The United States will become a majority-minority nation by 2042. The growing number of low SES and minority students entering higher education makes it pivotal that this demographic be successful in order to be globally competitive. In Figure 5, in this
study it shows an estimated 30% of entering college freshmen are first-generation and 24% (4.5 million students) are both first-generation and low-income (Ramsey & Peale, 2010).

Figure 5. Group college enrollment rate for 1st generation students, 1st generation and low-income student and students that had at least one parent to graduate college.

The importance of preparing low-income and first-generation students, who today make up over 50% of freshmen enrolling into higher education, becomes even more pivotal, as shown in Figure 6. that 89% of low-income, first-generation students leave college within six years without completing a degree (Ramsey & Peale).
Figure 6. Low income students who didn’t graduate from a college/university within six years and low income students who graduated within six years.

Statistical data further reveals one-fourth of this group leave after the first year of college, four times the attrition rate of higher income second generation students (Ramsey & Peale). Issues of marginalized populations ascending the educational ladder promise to become increasingly important as census projections highlight the nation’s demographics’ transformation to a majority-minority.

Significance of the Problem. In September of 2011, TRIO programs’ directors were notified of the immediate economic effect of government budget cuts; UB, Student Support Services, Ronald McNair Post-baccalaureate, and TRIO Training programs all received a three percent cut (United States Department of Education, 2012). In 2012, nearly 800,000 students were provided services in some form by one of these programs (United States Department of Education). However, the three percent cut meant nearly 65,000 students lost the opportunity to receive services aimed at exposing low-income and first-generation students to higher education opportunities (United States Department
of Education). Limited program budgets will negatively affect the work UB staff across the nation performs with first-generation and low-income populations, who are enrolling into college at greater numbers, but not graduating at nearly the rate of their wealthier peers (Muraskin, Lee, Wilner, & Swail, 2004). Students in higher income families complete more college course work and graduate at a significant higher rate than students from low-income families who tend to stop out after one year in college (Muraskin et al.).

**Political Environment**

In April 2011 congress and the President of the United States agreed to cut $26.6 million from programs which resulted in 3.1% cuts across the board for all TRIO programs (McNair Scholars Program, 2011). The impact of these cuts was significant. Over 65,000 TRIO students lost services due to these cuts (U.S. Department of Education). In January 2012, President Obama and Congress agreed to a 13.4 million dollar increase for TRIO programs which resulted in 826 UB programs were funded for the grant cycle September 2012 (U.S. Department of Education).

The results of the November 2014 elections could see Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee becoming the new chair of the Senate Education Committee. Sen. Lamar Alexander hasn’t appeared supportive of TRIO programs in the past. The committee’s senior Republican, in early 2014, asked a group of five panelists if the budgets for TRIO and Gear Up, which each encompass several separate programs, would be better spent on more Pell Grants (Thomason, 2014). In another article the author stated the impending change the election results could mean in the area of education,

The change will likely be something of a double-edged sword for colleges and universities, higher education advocates said. On the one hand, colleges will find
more help from Republicans in their longstanding efforts to roll back federal requirements they view as burdensome. At the same time, higher education may face tougher battles over federal funding for academic research and student aid programs, as GOP majorities embrace more austere budget caps (Stratford, 2014).

If the last 15 years is any predictor, a divided government may result in more gridlock between Democrats and Republicans. If gridlock continues between the two political parties it will leave the future of TRIO program uncertain. Therefore, the angst that a number of staff, parents and students have felt for a number of years regarding the survival of the program will increase even more so with the new makeup of congress in January 2015.

**Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual model framing this study will be Lewin’s (1939) Autocratic Leadership style. There are several characteristics of the Autocratic Leadership style, which are:

- The autocratic leader retains all power, authority, and control, and reserves the right to make all decisions.
- Autocratic leaders distrust their subordinate’s ability, and closely supervise and control people under them.
- Autocratic leaders involve themselves in detailed day-to-day activities, and rarely delegate or empower subordinates.
- The autocratic leader adopts one-way communication. They do not consult with subordinates or give them a chance to provide their opinions, no matter the potential benefit of such inputs.
• Autocratic leadership assumes that employee motivation comes not through empowerment, but by creating a structured set of rewards and punishments.

• Autocratic leaders get work done by issuing threats and punishments and evoking fear.

• The primary concern of autocratic leaders remains dealing with the work at hand and not on developmental activities.

• Autocratic leaders maintains full responsibility and take full credit for the work (Nayab, 2011, para. 5; Newstrom & Davis, 1993; Tannenbaum, R. & Schmidt, 1973; Vecchio, 1998).

Lewin’s leadership model posit that in the Autocratic/Authoritarian style works best when there is a need for input by others or when input would not create a positive outcome on the decision which was made. This style of leadership is advantageous when quick and decisive decision making is a requirement (Newstrom & Davis). However, a weakness in this style of leadership it limits employees input which could lead to frustration (Newstrom & Davis). The research questions for this study align closely with this framework, which examines the perceptions of current and former students and a college administrator on the type of leader the director of the Midwestern University UB program was and how she dealt with the number of changes over her tenure.

**Research Questions**

1.) How does an UB director explain the evolution and continued existence of MU’s UB program?
a. What have been the major challenges; and what have been the major challenges in serving students’ needs (i.e. budget, federal regulations and objectives).

b. What institutional support has been provided to the director?

c. How does students’ stories/perception describe the director’s leadership style?

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the study is to provide a look at the issues confronting a director of an UB program serving students of low socioeconomic and first generation status and how did those student examine her leadership ability during their participation. The study’s focus is how a director provides services to low-income students, who have completed their UB program, through obtaining the director’s, former students’, and host institutions administrators’ perceptions. To gain a better understanding of the program, the researcher plans to interview a UB director, eight current and former UB students, and a college administrator to gain insight to their perceptions about the director. By examining the institutional environment the researcher will gain a better understanding on the complexities a director must encounter in order to navigate and manage an UB program.

Significance of Study

Currently, high-risk, low-income, and minority students across the nation are becoming an established part of the effort to recruit, retain, and graduate a population of students underrepresented in institutions of higher education in America (Myers, 2003; Ackermann, 1991). However, as this population has increased their college enrollment,
reduced government funding has slowly made resources, such as the Upward Bound Program, unavailable. The article *Highland’s Upward Bound Program to Close Amid Lack of Federal Funding* details the losses programs experienced in 2012; the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) states:

> TRIO services (funded) through the Department of Education had their programming budget cut by $49 million during last year’s budget negotiations. As a result, eighteen states are losing 25 percent of student programming, with some geographic areas losing more than 40 percent of existing programs. The COE has noted a perceived funding discrepancy in the distribution between rural and urban locations (*Highland’s Upward Bound Program*, para. 6).

The past three decades have shown an ever growing shift in policies toward low-income families attempting to enroll their children in college. Gary Berg, Dean of Extended Education at California State University Channel Islands, in 2010, was asked about the policy changes and their effects over the past three decades on low-income families. Berg responded:

> [The public policy changes] . . . has led to a hardened attitude towards the funding of higher education and financial aid policies. Starting with President Reagan, funding for public higher education in America was significantly shifted towards a reliance on loans. The argument was made that investment in college aid had been excessive. George H.W. Bush further cut federal grants to low-income students during his period in office. In the Clinton years, the New Democrats took the centrist strategy of targeted tax relief for middle-class families with children
attending college. While at the state level funding has been up and down, the
general pattern of flat funding for higher education has been continued up to the
present. (Golden, 2010, para. 6)

The significance of this proposed study is to provide a case study model that will
examine a director’s, college administrator’s and students’ perceptions of the director’s
leadership style while they were involved with the UB program under the director in this
study. The data gathered for this study will consist of director’s, college administrator’s
and students’ perceptions and beliefs in how the UB program’s director has impacted
their academic and social growth and college career. The researcher will be guided by
Lewin’s (1939) Autocratic Leadership model. The selection of the UB program in the
study was based on proximity, a number of unique qualities that will be detailed later in
chapter two and access provided to the researcher. A case study is best suited for this
study to reveal the complexities of managing an UB program, especially during
continuous economic upheaval all programs encounter. The case study model will permit
the researcher to detail the context in which the director operates an UB program.

Methodology

I intend to employ a case study model to conduct this research. The case study
will be utilized to examine how the perceptions of the director, administrator, current and
former UB students of MU aligned with one another concerning the director’s impact on
the project. According to Robert K. Yin, (2003) a case study design should be considered
in a research project when the following apply:

a) The focus of the study is to answer “how” and “why” questions;

b) The researcher cannot manipulate the behavior of those involved in the study;
c) The researcher want to cover contextual conditions because he or she believe they’re relevant to the phenomenon under study; or

d) The boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context. (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 545)

This study, which will examine a director’s, administrator’s and students’ perceptions of what they believe to be the benefits of participating in the program managed by this director, must include contextual considerations, as a program located in the Midwest. It was in this setting that the director developed programming and curriculum to assist students to become successful. It would be unlikely for me to have an accurate perception of this UB program without considering the context under which the director operated.

**Data Collection.** The program director will act as gatekeeper in the study. The gatekeeper establishing rapport with potential participants is essential to gain access to data and to their “perspectives about responding to an action or process” (Creswell, 1998, p. 117; Hammersly & Atkinson, 1995). In order to recruit the director and program for this case study, I will contact several programs in the Ohio and Michigan area. The result will either bring an interested party who wants to take part in the study or suggestions of who to contact to take part in this research. This study will use the convenience sampling method, which involves drawing from samples easily accessible and willing to participate in a study (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). The convenience sample that was utilized in this study was volunteer (Teddlie & Yu). While this method is the easiest, most accessible, and least expensive for researchers, the flaws include: volunteers may not be representative of the larger overall population and volunteers may be more willing their numbers are good
Although researchers should keep in mind the flaws in convenience sampling, often this is the only sampling model available and the primary purpose of a research project may not be to generalize, but to better understand relationships that may exist, which in this case is a director’s and students’ perceptions of the impact his/her management of the program has benefitted the student and institution (McMillan, 1996).

Case studies are unique from other types of qualitative research because they are more intensive, descriptive, and analytical of a single unit or bounded system (Merriam 1998, p. 19; Smith, 1978). The researcher will develop a qualitative interview for the prospective director and students participating in the study (Flowers & Moore, 2003; Krueger, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Williams & Williams, 2006). It is recommended in-depth interview duration be between 60 and 90 minutes (Mack, Woodson, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005.). Interviews will be audio recorded, and the researcher will transcribe data from the recordings. When a researcher interviews a participant, it should be documented via audio, video, and/or backup notes (Mack et al.). Additionally, it is helpful if the researcher states the interviews’ beginning and ending times on tape (Mack et al.).

Limitations

Since this is a case study, the qualitative research will use a small sample. This case study is restricted to one UB Program. Therefore, the results will not be a generalized representation of other populations or programs. However, since this is a case study of one UB Program, the researcher will be able to provide more detail such as the stories and experiences of all of the individuals involved in the study. The interviews will be conducted in person in the interviewees’ (director and administrator) offices at MU or
the target high school in the case of the director. Current student interviews will take place at their target high school in classroom that will be assigned to us by the director and/or principal. Former students of the UB program will be interview at either the institution or at the target high school. The researcher in this study is attempting to examine the perceptions of an UB director and former students of the project. In order to strengthen this study, various data gathering methods will be utilized, such as interviews, annual reports, grades, graduation data, grant document and budget reports. According to Cohen and Crabtree (2006), member checks is a method designed around qualitative studies to test data, interpretations, and conclusions gathered by the researcher from the interview where the data was derived. Member checks can be completed formally or informally when researchers are observing or engaging in a conversation with the interviewee (Cohen & Crabtree). However, there are drawbacks to employing this method, including differing interpretations between researcher and group members (Angen, 2000; Cohen & Crabtree; Morse, 1994; Sandelowski, 1993). I will further discuss data triangulation in chapter three. Data triangulation refers to the use of two or more approaches to investigating a research question in order to enhance confidence in the findings (Denzin, 1970). Thus, as the researcher I will conduct an interview with the program’s director, a university or high school administrator, former students, the program’s annual report data may validate the numbers collected by the program; additionally, data from the program’s target school(s) will also provide valuable information on the program’s efficacy.
Definition of Terms

To provide a better understanding of the topics discussed in this study, the following definitions of key terms and concepts are presented below.

TRIO- These programs were the first college access and retention programs in the United States. The programs were born out of the 36th President of the United States of America, Lyndon Baines Johnson’s War on Poverty Program. The Educational Opportunity Act of 1964 help create the Upward Bound Program in the summer of 1965 (Council of Opportunity in Education, 2012). The Higher Educational Act of 1965 created the Educational Talent Search Program. Finally, in 1968, the Student Support Services program was created to provide access to college students from low-income families to succeed in higher education (Council of Opportunity in Education). These three programs were the nucleus that became known as the TRIO program (Council of Opportunity in Education). Today, several additional programs work under the umbrella of the TRiO program, such as The Ronald McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program (1986), Upward Bound Math and Science (1990), Veteran Upward Bound, Training Program for Federal TRIO programs (1976), Educational Opportunity Centers (1972), TRIO Dissemination Partnership (1998) (Council of Opportunity in Education).

Summer Bridge Upward Bound Program was originally designed as an eight week program but has become a six week summer program for students in the UB Program. The Summer Bridge Program (SBP) is the period between students’ graduation from secondary education and enrollment in their first year in college the following fall. The program is structured and includes classes taught to prepare students for college, such English, math, and science. The SBP provides counselors for participants to discuss
issues that may arise and initiate meetings with faculty, administration, and peers at the institution. Furthermore, staff in the SBP provides workshops and speakers to introduce students to programs available on campus, such as a tutorial program, clubs, intramural sports, and other activities to help facilitate students’ social integration within the institution (Kluepfel, 1994; Myers, 2003).

The Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) is a nonprofit organization, established in 1981 (Council for Opportunity in Education, 2012). This organization is dedicated to expanding college opportunities for low-income, first-generation students and for students with disabilities throughout the United States (Council for Opportunity in Education). Its membership includes more than 1,000 colleges and agencies (Council for Opportunity in Education). Through its many membership services, COE works in conjunction with institutions of higher education and agencies hosting TRIO programs to specifically help low-income, first-generation students enroll, be retained, and matriculate through college (Council for Opportunity in Education). Approximately, one million low-income, first-generation students and students with disabilities each year receive college access and retention services from numerous higher education institutions and agencies (Council for Opportunity in Education).

Michigan College Access Programs and Personnel (MI-CAPP) is a chapter of the Mid-America Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel. This group consists of Michigan TRIO professionals committed to helping students who want to achieve success in school and in life (MI-CAPP, 2012).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)- The NCLB Act of 2001 was intended to ensure all children receive a high quality education and thereby “close the achievement gap
between high- and low performing children, especially the achievement gaps between minority and non-minority students, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers” (Pub. L. No. 107-110, 6301 (3), 2002).

*The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (EOA)* was the centerpiece of the ‘War on Poverty,’ which was essential part of the ‘Great Society; legislative agenda of President Lyndon Baines Johnson’s administration. The EOA provided low-income citizens opportunities in job training, adult education, and loans to small businesses to attack the roots of unemployment and poverty. The EOA was passed in August, 1964. EOA programs included VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America); the Job Corps; the Neighborhood Youth Corps; Head Start; Adult Basic Education; Family Planning; Community Health Centers; Congregate Meal Preparation; Economic Development; Foster Grandparents; Legal Services; Neighborhood Centers; Summer Youth Programs; Senior Centers; and others. The EOA established over a thousand of Community Action Agencies (CAA’s) at the local level to implement Great Society programs. Upward Bound was created from this legislation (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

*First-generation students* can come from families with low-incomes or from middle-class families without a college-going tradition. Some students have parents who support their plans for higher education; others are under family pressure to enter the workforce right after high school (CollegeBoard, 2012). Often these students do not know what options for high education are available, have fears about going to college, and have misconceptions about college and its costs (CollegeBoard).

*Low-Income - the definition that the UB Program utilizes* – mandated by congress that to qualify students must come from families with incomes at 150% or less of the
federal poverty level. Two-thirds of the students served in the Federal TRIO programs must from families that are low-income. Table 2 is the Federal TRIO Program 2012 guideline for what determines low-income levels in the United States.

*Upward Bound-* was born out of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (EOA) in 1965. This pre-college program was the first of the TRIO programs aiming to provide access to higher education to low-income students in the United States. The pre-college program was designed to provide access, resources, and motivation to its participants to help them succeed in secondary education and go on to receive a baccalaureate degree. The program addresses these items through after-school tutorials, supplementary instructions, workshops, mentoring, summer program instruction, college visits, assistance in completing the Free Application of Federal Aid, and college applications (Council for Opportunities in Education, 2012).

**Table 2**

*2014 Federal TRIO Low-Income Levels*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Family Unit</th>
<th>48 States, D.C. and Outlying Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Alaska</th>
<th>Hawaii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$17,505</td>
<td>$21,870</td>
<td>$20,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$23,595</td>
<td>$29,490</td>
<td>$27,135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$29,685</td>
<td>$37,110</td>
<td>$34,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>$35,775</td>
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</tr>
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<td>5</td>
<td>$41,865</td>
<td>$52,350</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$60,135</td>
<td>$75,210</td>
<td>$69,165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* This table determines family Social economic status. Federal TRIO Program 2014 guideline for what determines low-income levels in the United States. This table is what programs use to determine whether students are low-income. All values represent the budget requirement for family size groups in all 48 states, D.C. and outlying jurisdiction.
Research Subjectivity

I previously worked with three federally funded UB programs in the Ohio and Michigan region. Because of the networking relationship I developed over the years, potential participants in this study, I believe, will be more willing to undergo an interview and study of their program. Because, I, have developed relationships with directors in the states of Michigan and Ohio who were impacted by the economic downturn in 2008, I can highlight how the project director manage to work with students and parents to keep the goal of graduating from college viable for their students, unlike other states who did not experience this severe situation.

Researcher’s Background. As a first-generation student, I participated in the UB program in high school. In addition, I worked in several capacities in the UB program for nearly 20 years. My first encounter with the program was as a student. As it will be shown later in this study, I was a student whose mother had to make attend tutorials, workshops and other activities that would prepare me for college. However, my mother believed education was pivotal to my future. After my first year as a student I didn’t need the push from my mother any longer to do the program and wanted to take part in the activities. After graduating college I decided to go back to my program and help students.

I began my career with UB as a volunteer. Later, I served in a couple of capacities as a paid employee in the program such as a tutor and resident advisor. After a couple of years, I became an Academic Skills Coordinator at a four year private institution. I worked in that capacity for eight years. In 2007 the researcher was hired as the director of small community college in Michigan. Therefore, my background in the program is
extensive and I’ve seen the program from nearly every angle as a student, volunteer, tutor, resident advisor, Academic Skills Coordinator and Program Director.

In this study I chose to not study any UB programs he was intimately involved with to minimize subjectivity in research findings. The UB program at MU in Michigan was identified because of its unique qualities such as one being that the program has had one director since its inception, 15 years ago. This mean the director has completed three grant cycles of the federally funded program. A grant cycle was four years in duration until 2012, when it became five years. The experience this director has will provide me with a rich perspective of the program. This will be beneficial for me when interviewing former students because this group would have completed the UB program with one director unlike a number of programs if one goes back nearly 15 years may find this position had changed several times. In addition, it will be beneficial because the proximity of the program will provide me the chance to travel and conduct interviews. Furthermore, I can compare current student experiences with former students to examine if they’re similar or changed over time. Therefore, I will not have to decipher which director initiated experiences or practices in the program.

I had to be sensitive to biases inherent in qualitative research (Merriu, 1998). A qualitative researcher must be a good communicator in order to empathize with interviewees, to develop a rapport, to ask well thought out questions and listen intently (Merrium). Therefore, when conducting a qualitative case study, a researcher will be "limited by the sensitivity and integrity of the investigator" (Merrium, p. 42). Merrium (1998) used a quote by Guba and Lincoln (1981) when she referred to possible concerns with bias in research as, “An unethical case writer could so select from among available
data that virtually anything he wished could be illustrated” (p. 378; Merriu
m). The researcher must be aware of biases possibly affecting the study (Merriu
m). Diener and Crandall’s (1978) pointed out that one can limit biases in case studies by stating:

In planning, conducting, analyzing and reporting his work the scientist should
strive for accuracy, and whenever possible, methodological controls should be
built in to help….Biases that cannot be controlled should be discussed in the
written report. Where the data only partly support the predictions, the report
should contain enough data to let readers draw their conclusions. (Merrium, 1998;
p. 162)

As aforementioned in this chapter, the researcher will utilize member checks in order to
test data, interpretations, and conclusions gathered by the researcher from the director and
students. However, there are drawbacks in employing this method, such as researcher and
group members disagreeing with interpretations (Angen, 2000; Cohen & Crabtree, 2006;
Morse, 1994; Sandelowski, 1993). I will develop an interview questionnaire for the
director, administrator and current/former students who will take part in this study.

Summary

This chapter presents why the UB program is important and how the project plays
a pivotal role in the future of this country in educating low-income and first-generation
students. As this chapter illustrates, the United States of America will be a minority-
majority country in approximately 30 years. This trend makes preparing low-income
students via higher education imperative in order to meet future employment demands.
The ever growing movement from a manufacturing society to a global economy will be
driven by technology, and it is imperative for the survival of the country that the above-
mentioned groups are trained and can become productive citizens. The UB program will be an important resource to help make this a reality. However, over the past decade, the program has increasingly been under peril of being defunded and UB directors’ abilities to run the program have seriously been hampered because of these budget cuts (Duncan, 2011). Therefore, directors must become more creative in serving a growing number of students with less funding for their programs. This study will be a case study analyzing the perceptions of an UB director and students to examine the program’s perceived role in assisting students to graduate from college within six years with a baccalaureate degree. This chapter provides an overview of the UB program, a look at statistics of how low-income and first-generation students perform in higher education and the most recent published graduation rates of this group. The chapter presents the researcher’s significance of the problem addressed in this study, statement of the problem, research questions, conceptual framework, and purpose of the study. Lastly, the researcher provided a comprehensive definition section to help explain to the reader terms and phrases that are unique to the world of TRIO and UB projects.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

The literature presented in this chapter summarizes the challenges that low-income and first-generation students must overcome to enroll into college, persist, and graduate. UB programs are judged on the percentage of a program’s participants who will graduate within six years from a college or university with their baccalaureate degree. This study will utilize one UB program in a case study to interview a director, an administrator from the college or target high school and current and former program participants. This research will help provide insights to learn what the director perceives his or her impact on a project has had on students and to see whether or not her perception’s matches the administrator, program data and with current and former students of the program who were intimately impacted by the director. This chapter presents pivotal literature to this study, such as; the history of outreach efforts to educate low-income students in the United States, the impact of judicial decisions and resultant public policies influencing the aforementioned educational endeavors, and the background and past studies of the UB program.

The Context of Educating Students of Low-Socioeconomic Status

Secretary of Education Arnie Duncan stated that, “Education predicts disparities in life chances, outcomes, life incomes, and the disparity has never been starker. I do absolutely see the dividing line in our society is around educational opportunity” (Kindt, 2010, para. 10). Dr. W. E. B. DuBois once stated that the pressing issue of the 20th century was “the color line” (1969, p. xi). However, in the second decade of the 21st
century, the most pressing social justice issue is providing every citizen of the United States the opportunity to pursue higher education (Enberg & Allen, 2011). Education has the potential to “unlock a life of reward and fulfillment” which can impact generations (Enberg & Allen, p. 787). Programs such as UB were created to help low-income and first-generation families reach this goal, which in the past seemed to be insurmountable because of the cost of higher education.

The downturn in the U.S. economy, which began in 2007, still finds the country recovering from the effects. The weakening economy has only increased the widespread “disparities in postsecondary access among black, Hispanic, and low-income students” (Bozick & Lauff, 2007; Enberg & Allen, 2011, p. 787). In Figure 7. The disparities between wealthy and low income students was illustrated by showing students from families whose income was over $100,000 enrolled in postsecondary institution in the fall immediately following high school graduation nearly doubled that of students from low income families.
Figure 7. 40% of low-income students enrolled in a postsecondary institution in the fall immediately following high school graduation as opposed to 84% of students who came from families whose income was over $100,000. Source: Bozick and Lauff (2007) and Enberg and Allen (2011).

First-generation and low-income students often face a multitude of challenges in their pursuit to obtain a baccalaureate degree, such as: conflicting obligations, unrealistic expectations, and poor preparation or support (Hsiao, 1992).

The absence of low-income students’ access to higher education has directly contributed to the obvious social inequality that has ensnared this nation from its inception. The tangible effect of low-income students not having equal access to higher education means these students and their families lose out in terms of potential income, the ability to contribute to their community at large, and potential talent that would advance society (Enberg & Allen, 2011). In a study concerning America’s failure to provide equal access to higher education for high achieving low-income students, Wyner, Bridgeland and DiIulio (2007) stated that “unless something is done, many more of
America’s brightest, lower income students will meet this same educational fate, robbing them of opportunity and our nation of a valuable resource” (p. 4).

**The History of Educating Low-Income Student**

This issue of educating the poor in this country is not new. As early as the colonial era and for most of American history, education was deemed only for sons of wealthy white landowners. However, by the early 19th century, America began moving towards free, state-supported and secular education when common schools were established (Guisepi, n.d.). In 1837, Massachusetts established a state board of education and Horace Mann was appointed the board’s secretary (Guisepi). Mann’s major reform as secretary was to improve the quality of teaching within the state. The results of this reform led to the establishment of the first public normal schools in the country. States throughout the United States followed the lead of Massachusetts and by the end of the 19th century common-schools became a permanent fixture in American education (Guisepi).

Near the end of the 19th century, secondary schools had grown to such a degree that they outnumbered the private academies in the United States (Guisepi, n.d.). In the beginning, the purpose of secondary schools was to give students the chance to extend and enhance their common school education (Guisepi). In 1862, the Morrill Land Grant Act was established under President Abraham Lincoln, which gave federal lands to states for the purpose of opening institutions of higher education for farmers and teachers (Purnell, 2013). The establishment of land grant colleges made secondary schools become more of a preparation tool, such as developing students academically (Purnell).
America had created a unique system of free education by the end of the 19th century, unlike what was done in many countries in Europe.

In countries in Europe where public school systems existed, such as in France and Germany, there were two unique systems (Guisepi, n.d.). In one system, children from a lower- or middle-class background who completed their elementary education could expect to move on to a vocational or technical school. An upper-class child was not expected to attend elementary school (Guisepi). Instead, a child from an upper-class family was tutored until the age of nine and would then enroll into a secondary school, such as a Latin grammar school (Guisepi). The purpose of such a school was to prepare students for enrollment into a university (Guisepi). The hope was that students would then emerge as future leaders in their respective countries (Guisepi). Instead of two separate and distinct educational systems for separate and distinct classes, the United States provided one system open to everyone (Guisepi). However, it has been noted that first-generation and low-income students are often placed in vocational, technical, and/or remedial programs. The results have impeded these students’ progress toward transferring to a four-year program (Striplin, 1999).

Students who are from low-income families, minorities, and/or first-generation are likely to lack specific types of “college knowledge” such as how to apply for financial aid, complete college applications, and take college preparatory courses (Vargas, 2004). Students from these groups often lack the understanding of the specific steps necessary to prepare for higher education, which includes knowledge of how to finance their education, complete college admissions applications, and make connections between career goals and educational requirements (Vargas).
Corrigan (2003) conducted an empirical study that examined the challenges that low-income students must endure in order to matriculate through a university. In prior studies, factors that played a role in how income level impacts retention rate among students were educational attainment of parents, family structure, and attendance status. A student’s living situation could impact the financial resources available to undergraduate students (Corrigan). For example, students living alone who are responsible for all household bills most likely will not have the financial resources to pay the additional cost of tuition, unlike students who have roommates or live at home and share bills. In addition, Corrigan provides UB with a very good definition that the program utilizes as to what low-income is in this country. Low-income students were defined as families who have an income equivalent to 150% of poverty or less (Corrigan). The poverty threshold determined by the U.S. government takes into account income and family structure (Corrigan). The data used in this research are from several previous studies conducted by the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (Corrigan). The National Post-Secondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) provides information on “student and family financing of higher education for a single academic year” (Corrigan, p. 26). Beginning Post-secondary Students (BPS) is a longitudinal study that follows first-time beginning students included in the NPSAS studies (Corrigan). The 1998 BPS follow-up tracks students who began three years earlier in 1995–96 (Corrigan). The study showed that low-income students, regardless of family makeup, are no more likely to work than their middle- and upper-income peers (Corrigan). However, low-income students are more likely to work more hours than middle-and upper-income students (Corrigan). Students of low SES are more likely to
attend school part-time (Corrigan). This has a strong correlation to the type of institution attended, which is generally a two-year community college (Corrigan). Also, low-income students are more likely to be independent and supporting family than their middle- and high-income peers (Corrigan). The limitation of this study was its time frame, which did not allow for thorough analysis of four-year degree attainment (Corrigan).

Students of low SES and or first-generation backgrounds face other hurdles which include, but are not limited to:

- A lack of knowledge of the campus environment, its academic expectations, and bureaucratic operations:
- A lack of adequate academic preparation;
- A lack time management skills; and
- A lack of support and sometimes hostility towards education from family members (Thayer, 2000).

First-generation students may encounter a cultural conflict between their environment and college community (Thayer). The participants of the UB program are low-income and/or first-generation students. Students who are first-generation are disproportionately overrepresented in a number of groups that are deemed at a disadvantage when it relates to higher education (Engle, 2007).

Characteristically, first-generation students will more likely be African American, Hispanic, female, older, responsible for dependent children, and from low-income families (Engle, 2007). These characteristics are all “independently associated” with low enrollment and graduation rates from post-secondary education (Engle, p. 25). The National Education Longitudinal Study in 2002 reported that data showed only 47% of
students who come from families in which either parent did not attend college fail to enroll into an institution of higher education one year after graduating from secondary school, whereas 15% of students who come from homes that have parents who have degrees fail to enroll into an institution of higher education one year after graduating from secondary school (Engle; NELS: 88, 2002). Other trends become apparent with first-generation students: they’re more likely to enter college with less academic preparation, and to lack access to information related to the college-going experience, either firsthand or from family members who have gone through the rigors of college (Thayer, 2000). In addition, first-generation students are more susceptible to doubting their academic and motivational abilities, feeling inadequate, and believing they are not college material (Striplin, 1999). First-generation students must overcome these obstacles and self-doubts in order to have a successful transfer into a four-year college (Striplin).

**Summary**

The literature in this section supports the fact that students from low-SES families face obstacles unlike their middle- and high-income peers. Students from low-SES families as a group don’t work more than students from the other income brackets; however, the burden comes in because students from low-income backgrounds work more hours. The literature supports that programs such as UB were established because of the lack of preparation and knowledge students from low-SES families have in applying for financial aid, completing college applications, and enrolling into college preparatory courses to prepare themselves for college-level work (Corrigan, 2003). Students from low-SES families are more likely to attend school part-time (Corrigan).
The literature suggests SES has a strong correlation to the type of institution that low-SES students attend, which is generally a two-year community college (Corrigan).

Today, the burdens that students from low-SES families encounter seem to be a growing phenomenon. Judicial decisions and implementation of public policies have impacted all Americans from every walk of life. However, decisions and policies in the area of education that significantly impacted students from low-SES families has led some critics to question the idea of equal access to education (Chaltain, 2011).

**Judicial Decisions and Public Policy Effect on Low-Income**

President Barack Obama issued a challenge to all Americans to “commit” to at least one year of postsecondary education (Obama, 2009), and in his 2010 State of the Union address said that “In the 21st century, one of the best anti-poverty programs is a world-class education” (Obama, 2010, p. 6). However, for many Americans, postsecondary attainment remains an elusive and sometimes seemingly unattainable goal that is restricted by an individual’s access to economic, human, social, and cultural capital, resources that are empirically linked to increases in two- and four-year postsecondary enrollment (Engberg & Wolniak, 2010a; Engberg & Wolniak, 2010b; Perna and Titus, 2005). Low-income, first-generation, and minority students have found that the recent recession and failing economy, has exacerbated these resource shortages. In 2009, the percentage of American citizens living in poverty reached its highest level in 15 years, with four million additional citizens at or below the poverty line and increased levels of poverty and unemployment found among young people lacking a college education (Eckholm, 2010). A disproportionate number of lower socioeconomic status students are lacking the requisite skills to compete for employment in this challenging
economy (Carnevale, 2010), which has exacerbated a cycle of social inequality in which individuals with a bachelor’s degree earn US $22,000 more, on average, than those holding only a high school diploma (Baum, Ma, & Payea, 2010). College has been considered the gateway to a young person improving his or her life. Students who attend and matriculate through a college or university not only improve the quality of their lives, but the lives of future generations of their families. The benefits of higher education can range from increased wages and, a healthier lifestyle to awareness of the world (Decker et al. 1997; Oakes et al. 2000; U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Some policies and legislation that have been passed throughout the past century and a half in the United States have gone a long way in making education more accessible to all Americans.

However, students who are from low-SES families can look at their neighborhood schools and contrast them to wealthier areas when comparing the quality of the facilities, teachers, and resources provided to students, and question the goal of equal access to education (Filardo, Vincent, Sung & Stein, 2006). On the subject of policies that were supposed to lead to equity in education, one writer stated:

Income inequality has reached unprecedented levels, the nation has simultaneously grown more racially and ethnically diverse, and massive spending disparities remain between schools. In today’s America, when it comes to public education, have we allowed our five-digit ZIP codes to become the equivalent of a lottery ticket to a better future? Is this really who we wish to be? (Chaltain, para. 12 & 13).

Although, there is much work still left to be done in the area of equal access to education the country has made strides since the 19th century.
Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) introduced the doctrine ‘separate but equal’ in the American lexicon (Palmer & Maramba, 2011). This case legalized racial segregation in private businesses and facilities. This landmark decision ensured that if African Americans desired higher education, their only option would be Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Garibaldi, 1991). The next landmark policy came by way of the country’s desire to assist young men returning home from the military.

The Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1945, or the GI Bill, made higher education financially feasible for veterans returning from Europe after WW II, and later the Korean War, to attend college (Thayer, 2000). This bill offered the opportunity for returning veterans to return to school on a college scholarship and offered low interest mortgage loans (Cruz, 2008). The immediate effect of this bill was seen three years after its implementation (Cruz). Nearly half of the country’s college students were veterans (Cruz). Before the GI Bill, higher education was, for the most part, the domain of wealthy and affluent white males due to the high cost of tuition. It would not be until the decision by the United States Supreme Court in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas (1954) that segregation in the field of education legally ended (Palmer & Maramba, 2011; Patterson, 2001). The decision led to desegregation, but the court stated that states could implement this with “all deliberate speed” (Brown v. Board of Education, 1954; Palmer & Maramba; Patterson).

The National Defense Education Act of 1958 provided student loans for financially disadvantaged students to attend college. President Lyndon Baines Johnson began his War on Poverty campaign to assist low-income Americans to combat the ill effects of generational poverty. In 1964, US President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the
Civil Rights Act (CRA), which included an Employment Opportunity Act (EOA) addendum. The EOA facilitated the UB program, a pre-collegiate program; designed to assist low-income and first-generation students’ matriculation from post-secondary educational institutions (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). The Higher Education Act of 1965 was part of President Johnson’s War on Poverty campaign to assist low-income, historically disadvantaged students. Subsequently, the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1972 provided federal grants and funding for financially disadvantaged students in higher education. The new policies and legislation that have been implemented over the years led to a plethora of studies that examined what effect these policies and legislation had on educating students and whether they helped usher in equity in education among racial, ethnic, and gender lines.

Hunter (2009) reviewed several state and federal educational initiatives that were implemented in hopes of repairing the negative effects of racial segregation on education. The article briefly touched upon the Plessey v. Ferguson (1896) ruling that legalized unequal public education for African Americans in the United States. The doctrine of “‘separate but equal’” was legally struck down by Brown v. Board of Education (1954) (Hunter, p. 575). The author examined the “‘Great Society’” legislation under President Lyndon B. Johnson during the 1960s. The purpose of this legislation, dubbed, “‘The War on Poverty,’” was to address the last vestiges of slavery and Jim Crow in the United States. The policies were meant to provide job skills to poor citizens in the country and to provide equity and access in public elementary, secondary, and higher education for the poor and minorities, and in particular, African Americans. Hunter (2009) discussed decisions from the Supreme Court of the United States that “rejected the use of race-
conscious policies to remedy past discrimination” against Black public school students, such as Bradley v. School Board of Richmond (165), Milliken v. Bradley (1977), Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978), and Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1 (2007) (p. 577). The limitation of this study is that it failed to discuss the Higher Education Act and the Gratz v. Bollinger (2003) case that occurred at the University of Michigan and how they affected Affirmative Action in the 21st century in undergraduate and graduate schools throughout the country. In addition, the author focused too narrowly on elementary and secondary education and did not provide much information on how these seminal cases affected minorities and low-income students in the area of higher education.

As the prior study examined how policies and education affected low-income and minority students, other studies have looked at whether states are truly providing their students with equal access to education. Dewey (1998) analyzed the policy-making and lobbying processes of the national higher-education policy domain. In addition, this study identifies lobbying principles or techniques typical of this domain (Dewey). A system analysis model was proposed to better understand the process of policy-making and lobbying practices for the national higher-education policy domain (Dewey). The six national higher education associations examined in this research included the American Council on Education (ACE), the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the Association of American Universities (AAU), the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU), and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) (Dewey). Dewey examined how leaders
perceived the nature of their effect or influence on national higher-education policy and how their views were similar or varied across associations. In addition, Dewey examined the benefits of primary national higher-education association membership for individuals and for institutions, and articulates the most effective methods of lobbying for the national higher-education associations. The study will assist the researcher when viewing the director at Midwestern University and the numerous lobbying activities they must undergo for their projects (Dewey). The current education policy of No Child Left Behind came to fruition with the election of President George W. Bush.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which was first passed during the Lyndon Johnson administration, was considered at the time to be the most far reaching educational legislation ever passed by congress until the rebranded No Child Left Behind (NCLB) that became law in 2002 (Hirsch, 2007; New York Times, 2012). The Act, which was enacted in 1965, primarily funded secondary education, but stopped short in nationalizing the educational curriculum in the United States (No Child Left Behind, 2012). In 2002, NCLB became law in the United States (Hirsch). The Act, which passed with large majorities in the House and Senate in 2001, with support from Democrats and Republicans alike, sought to make standardized testing scores a basis to judge whether schools are succeeding or failing their students (Dillon, 2010; Hirsch; No Child Left Behind).

President Bush hoped to sell NCLB on the federal level by touting the success of his state of Texas, where he was elected as governor for two years, and New York regarding standardized test scores (Hirsch, 2007). The NCLB mandated that 95% of students in third to eighth grade and those in secondary school, “be assessed through
standardized tests aligned with challenging academic standards in math, reading and (beginning in 2007–2008) science” (Hursch, p. 296; US Department of Education, 2003c, p.4). In addition, all states were required to provide a sample of their tested students’ grades in order to compare pupils to their peers in other states (Hursch). States were required to submit a plan to the federal government related to student assessment explaining what method they would use to determine if schools were making adequate progress (Hursch). Annually, each state should demonstrate that there has been an increase in the percentage of students’ testing as proficient until 2014, when states must show that all students within the state are proficient in reading and math (Hursch). While some praised the new educational policy because it made teachers and schools accountable in new and far reaching ways, others derided the bill because of its sole focus on test scores, which led to a watering down of curriculum and teaching solely to the test, or even cheating on the test (No Child Left Behind, 2012).

Critics of NCLB found that the bill has caused more problems than it answered. The legislation that strongly emphasized standardized test score results had a negative effect on schools that served predominantly minority communities and low-income students (Hursch, 2007). Many opponents of standardized tests, such as the SAT and ACT, claim these tests are inherently unfair to minorities and low-income students because they are culturally and educationally biased against minority groups. In addition, the instruments being used to measure students’ ability to succeed in higher education frequently does not accurately assess minority test-takers’ knowledge of the curriculum (Flemings & Garcia, 1998). Furthermore, test scores strongly correlate with students’ socioeconomic status (Hursch). This means the test results will more likely reflect only
particular “students’ average family income rather than teaching or the curriculum” (Hursch, p. 299).

The critics have seen that standardized tests have actually increased education inequality (Hursch, 2007). Hursch’s findings suggested that there is a strong correlation between test results and, family income, as well as test results and racial make-up. The impact of implementing the standards can be seen in increasing attrition rates throughout the country, especially in urban areas (Hursch). In 2010, the United States Department of Education’s School and Staffing Survey (SASS) found that low-income students remained disadvantaged in American schools after several years of testing:

- In high-poverty secondary schools, core academic classes (English/language arts, mathematics, science, and history/social studies) are twice as likely to be taught by out-of-field teachers as are those classes in low-poverty schools.
- In our high-poverty middle and high schools, one out of every five core classes is assigned to an out-of-field teacher.
- One in four middle and high school mathematics courses in high-poverty schools is taught by an educator with neither a math major nor certification in the subject.
- The percentage of classes taught by out-of-field teachers in high-poverty suburban schools (25.1 percent) is about 10 percentage points higher than the national average (15.6 percent).
- One in four core classes (25.1 percent) in high-poverty suburban schools has an out-of-field teacher, compared with one in nine (10.6 percent) in low-poverty suburban schools. (The Education Trust, 2010)
Sarah Almy, the director of teacher quality at The Education Trust, stated:

This puts America’s low-income students at an enormous disadvantage. Students who are taught by educators with subject-area knowledge tend to achieve at higher levels than those who aren’t, especially in mathematics. So when low-income kids – the ones most likely to face outside-of-school challenges – are assigned to math classes taught by English majors, we are dramatically increasing the odds against their success and stacking the deck for failure. (The Education Trust, para. 4)

The No Child Left Behind legislation was supposed to deal with the issue of out-of-field teachers teaching core classes. The NCLB legislation was set up to obligate districts and states to not have low-income and minority children disproportionately taught by “inexperienced, unqualified and out of field teachers” (The Education Trust, para. 7). The NCLB legislation has made some progress in that area, such as in 2007–2008, when “95 percent of secondary level core academic classrooms” were taught by qualified teachers (The Education Trust, para. 8). However, a teacher’s survey through SASS indicated that there is still much work that states must do to achieve equity in education (The Education Trust).

In 2010, President Obama made a proposal to eliminate NCLB, which was considered President George W. Bush’s “hallmark education initiative” (Anderson, 2010, para. 1). The Obama administration proposal would keep intact testing for students in math and reading, but would include and measure progress in other subject areas such as history and science (Anderson). Under the Obama Administration, a greater emphasis would be placed on academic growth rather than the Bush approach that gauged school
success based solely on a pass-fail model. In the new proposal, a student who began three grades behind in a particular subject area, but improved two grade levels during the school year would be considered a success (Anderson). Under the NCLB initiative, it would be viewed as a failure because the student would be considered below their grade level (Anderson). However, because of increased partisan bickering between Republicans and Democrats, little has been done in this area in Congress.

In 2011, Obama authorized an executive order that gave states the opportunity to request an exemption from the NCLB legislation that required all students in a school be proficient in math and reading by 2014 (No Child Left Behind, 2012). States who receive this exemption must set new goals that aim to prepare students for higher education and careers (No Child Left Behind). Furthermore, states must design accountability systems that, “Reward high performing schools and single out low-performing schools for ‘rigorous and comprehensive interventions,’ and to develop and implement plans for improving educational outcomes for poor and minority students and other underperforming groups” (No Child Left Behind, para.7). As of June 1, 2012, 19 states have received temporary waivers from the NCLB legislation with another 18 states and Washington D.C. awaiting word if they will receive an exemption (Eight states get waiver, 2012).

Since its inception NCLB has shaped the direction of UB programs. The objectives and whether programs are judged to be successful or failing is based partially on the success of students on their state’s reading and math scores. Directors must take into account how to use resources and staff to help students become successful on these tests. The task of a director can be made more difficult in some cases: for example, in
Ohio, it is required that students pass their state test (Ohio Graduation Test) in order to graduate from high school (Ohio Department of Education, 2013). However, in Michigan, whether a student passes or fails the state test will not prevent them from graduating (Michigan Department of Education, 2013). The constant changes that have occurred in education and the continuous need to ensure that all students are treated equal in education led to the creation of the Department of Education. This department was created to fight the inequities that have been a part of education in this country. The DOE has long championed the ideal of equal access to education for all students in the United States. This idea has been a part of the department’s mission since its inception.

**Connection to Upward Bound**

Programs such as Upward Bound provide a tutorial and summer instruction program to assist students who may lack the resources and instructors to teach core subjects that will be critical to long-term college success. Instructors in the UB program are required to specialize in the content area they plan to teach to ensure students are receiving adequate instruction. The Upward Bound program was created to provide support to participants who are from low-income families and the first to graduate from college, with the goal of increasing the number of students, from this at risk group, who matriculate through college with a baccalaureate degree (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

**Summary**

The literature in this section supports the fact that students from low-SES families still face burdens brought forth by current policies such as NCLB. Although the intent of NCLB was to make education more equitable across the board, the results have yet to
reach that goal. Since the inception of the NCLB legislation 25% of students in middle and secondary schools in high-poverty areas are more likely to be taught courses by out-of-field teachers (The Education Trust, 2010). In addition, in high-poverty secondary schools, core academic classes are twice as likely to have an out-of-field instructor teaching the courses to low-SES students (The Education Trust). Policies such as the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1945, the National Defense Act of 1958, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 did assist low-SES families in education; however, low-income students are still far from reaching the goal of equity in education (Chaltain, 2011).

**Upward Bound**

In 1964, United States President Lyndon B. Baines Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act which (CRA) paved the way for the establishment of the UB program. This pre-collegiate program is designed to assist low-income and first-generation students’ transition into and matriculation from post-secondary educational institutions (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). This federally funded program is designed to provide low-income first-generation students with the skills, tools, and motivation integral to future educational successes at the collegiate level (U.S. Department of Education). UB, one of the three original TRIO programs, is the oldest of the initial series of federally funded programs that were created in the 1960s (U.S. Department of Education). UB is defined by the Department Education as a program that provides fundamental support to participants in their preparation for college entrance. The program provides opportunities for participants to succeed in their precollege performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits. UB serves: high school students from low-income families, and high school students from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor’s degree. The goal
of UB is to increase the rate at which participants complete secondary education and enroll in and graduate from institutions of postsecondary education. (U.S. Department of Education, para. 2)

The program is funded through a grant from the United States Department of Education (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). The purpose of the program is to invest in the future by assisting high school students who are first-generation college students and/or from low-income families prepare for success in college (U.S. Department of Education). The UB program does this by offering tutoring, supplemental educational and cultural opportunities, college entrance exam preparation, and college and career exploration (U.S. Department of Education). In addition, the program helps the Department of Education provide equal access to education. Due to significantly increased efficiencies placed on programs and new funding strategies, which were greatly influenced by the economic downturn in the United States in 2008, monies provided through the DOE have decreased for UB programs throughout the country (U.S. Department of Education Press Office, 2012). In the 2012 grant cycle competition, UB programs suffered major cuts. Currently, only 826 UB programs were awarded for the 2012–2013 period compared to 951 in 2011–2012 (U. S. Department of Education). This cut meant that an estimated 5,000 students lost services provided by the UB program (A. Vialpando, personal communication, May 21, 2012). Furthermore, 23% of UB programs were lost in this cycle (A. Vialpando, personal communication). Overall, since 2005, 85,000 students have lost services from one of the several TRIO programs and 44,000 of those students were lost in the past three years (A. Vialpando, personal communication). Programs such as UB have been a pathway for many low-income and first-generation
students to succeed in secondary education and then matriculate through a four-year university.

**Goals and Objectives of Upward Bound.** The purpose of these programs is to provide low-income and first-generation collegians with the skills, tools, and motivation integral to future educational successes (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). The creation of the UB program has given many students the opportunity to become the first in their family to matriculate through higher education and provide better lives for future generations in their family and communities. Over the years, the program has undergone some changes, but it remains uniform in its goals and objectives, even though there are a number of models of the program to reach those specific goals and objectives that the Department of Education put forth.

Students who are eligible to participate in the UB program must be citizens of the United States, between the ages of 13 years to 19 years, demonstrate a need for academic support, and be potential first-generation college students, low-income, or have a high risk for academic failure (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11 & 1070a-13). Generally, UB participants are identified primarily from the target intermediate and secondary schools, community agencies, current and former program participants, and through formal and informal recruitment activities. Programs will give priority to students that are high risk for academic failure. Formal recruitment activities consist of staff presentations in target school classrooms, assemblies, and community agencies. Presentations are conducted during appropriate times during the school day for maximum engagement of students and, include information about objectives, purpose, eligibility, and activities, as well as the distribution of program applications (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).
UB summer programs can take on various forms, from those where students reside on campus for six weeks, to others where students go home at the end of the day. A summer program, which is a vital component in the services provided by the UB project, has been mentioned in the literature as being an effective practice for high-risk students (Hansen, Evenbeck, & Williams, 2008). Michele J. Hansen, Director of Assessment, stated, “investing resources into programs that help aid students’ transitions to college by exposing them to collegiate-level expectations may help promote academic success” (Hansen et al., p. 4). Additionally, bridge programs may be particularly beneficial for at-risk students as they help students successfully integrate both academically and socially (Hansen et al.).

Although each UB program is tailored to its clientele, there are several commonalities found within them. Research indicates that the most productive aspect of UB is its ability to provide clients with a roadmap to academic success by developing not only their core academic abilities, but also their social skills as they transition from high school and into a higher education institution (Myers, 2003). Research indicates that there is yet another, often-ignored, benefit to a client’s engagement with UB. These programs are able to facilitate an intangible attachment to the physical campus, familiarity with college resources, and collegiate-level performance expectations (Myers). Furthermore, the interpersonal skills that are developed in such a program will be needed to successfully build personal and professional relationships with current students, faculty, and staff (Myers). In order for students to receive this type of high level experience from the program, a trained staff with credentials, is needed to carry out the goals and objectives of the project. Continuity is an important part of the program. Students must
develop trust in the staff in order to receive the help that is needed in the areas of academics, social and, family issues, and other matters that may come up during their high school years.

**General Studies on the Upward Bound program.** The UB programs have become important to institutions of higher education because the continuous increase of new students means more students who are unprepared and ill-equipped to handle the rigors of university-level coursework (Garcia & Paz, 2009; Strayhorn, 2011). Bettinger and Long (2009) reported that public universities are spending upwards of more than $1 billion annually on remedial education (Stayhorn). Furthermore, businesses and institutions spend nearly $16.6 billion annually to teach new hires or students skills that should have been learned during their secondary education (Greene, 2000; Strayhorn).

Egeland, Hunt, and Hardt (1970) sought to examine how the UB program impacted attitude and motivation in relation to college enrollment. Researchers gathered data from 21 target UB programs from the 1967 cohort and followed these students to see if they enrolled into college (Egeland et al.). The sample size consisted of a total of 412 UB alumni; 26% were not enrolled and 74% were enrolled in some form of post-secondary education (Egeland et al.). A control group of non-UB participants was selected to be part of two groups: a group who enrolled into college and another group who were not enrolled (Egeland et al.). The two UB groups (Enrollees/Non Enrollees) and the two control groups (Enrollees/Non Enrollees) were matched together in terms of high school GPA and areas of study. The groups were selected based on geographic area, and all came from the 21 target areas (Egeland et al.). The groups were tested on nine measures related to academic attitude and motivation (Egeland et al.). The findings suggest that
there was no significant difference between the college enrollment of UB students and the control group with regard to ethnic backgrounds, parents’ education, the number of siblings in the household, and the father’s employment. However, there was a significant difference in peer attitudes toward UB and college enrollment. In the non-college group, they found the peer group’s attitude toward UB was “ambivalent” whereas the college group reported an increase in academic aspiration and motivation to attend college because of their participation in Upward Bound (Egeland et al.).

A limitation of the Egeland et al., (1970) study is that the program, which began in 1965 and was still growing, was in its early stages. A pertinent question related to this study is, did the UB programs involved have sufficient time to work and influence the cohort from 1967? At most, this cohort would have had two years with their UB program while others may have been in their very first year. The study outcomes may have been greatly influenced because of the lack of time staff had to work with this first group. This could lead to many of the non-college peer groups being apathetic towards the program. However, as in a previous study that is considered outdated, this research provided a historical context for how the UB program was designed in its early stages. A difference from the summer program of that time to now is the shorter timeframe of six weeks. Another difference is that the 1967 program had more participants (75) than today (most programs have 50 participants). The number of students is important because there were fewer resources and less funding provided by the government for the typical 75 student participants of 1967 than today’s 50 to 60 participants.

Gordy-McCready (2001) examined the efficacy of UB students and the long-term impact of participating in the program as it relates to the quality of their lives (QOL). The
study compared the QOL experienced by Swarthmore UB former participants to a comparison group from Chester, Pennsylvania, that had similar backgrounds and ambitions. The objective and subjective components of QOL were evaluated in this study by using the Comprehensive Quality of Life Scale - Adult version (5th edition), as well as a measure of global life quality (Gordy-McCready). Traditional educational outcomes such as college enrollment and completion rates were also assessed to determine the effectiveness of the program (Gordy-McCready). In this study, there were 112 respondents: 60 UB alumni and 52 in the comparison group (Gordy-McCready). Overall ratings on QOL were not found to be dependent on college completion or participation in UB for either group. However, there were a significantly greater number of former UB participants who completed college (88%) in contrast to the comparison sample (25%) (Gordy-McCready). In addition, alumni reported that their enrollment rate in college was influenced most by family support, participation in UB, and financial aid, in that order (Gordy-McCready). Former UB participants detailed the positive and long-term effects of participating in Swarthmore College UB, which was supported by the significantly higher QOL ratings in this study (Gordy-McCready). The limitation in this study was the small sample size which may not generalize to a larger sample.

Mireles (2009) examined why African American and Latino participants in the UB program experience different outcomes from the program. Mireles attempted to gain a better understanding of what variables may have influenced groups in his case study that involved three UB programs in northern California that had 59 participants who were entering their senior year in high school (Mireles). Students took part in surveys during
their summer UB component, and 29 of those participants took part in hour-long interviews (Mireles). The goals of this study were:

- To examine how African American and Latino UB participants perceived their relationship with UB, as a way to understand how they perceived their relationship with education; and
- To investigate whether non-school variables were affecting how and why they formed these differences (Mireles).

Mireles’ findings suggest that environmental issues, such as how students perceive their parent’s roles, their family narratives, and their racial and ethnic perceptions, impact how African Americans and Hispanic students form academic identities. The limitation in this dissertation is its small sample size which was limited to three programs in Northern California. This may limit generalizations to other programs.

In the area of evaluating the effectiveness of an UB program on Hispanic students, Sterling (2009) examined this question. The study attempted to determine whether or not Hispanic students in an UB program increased their scores to proficient levels on standardized achievement tests (Sterling). The researcher used scoring at proficient or advanced levels on standardized achievement tests as an indicator of readiness for postsecondary education success (Sterling). In addition, the study evaluated the perspectives of Hispanic students participating in the UB program and its academic impact on the students. Lastly, the study looked at the policy implications of UB and considered practices that could be included in the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965. The limitation of this study is that its population included only Hispanic students at one UB program.
In Grimard and Maddaus’s (2004) study on rural UB programs, the researchers examined barriers that low-income rural youth encounter in order to enroll into a college or university. An UB program located at the University of Maine was the subject of this study, and researchers investigated this program’s strategies for combatting these barriers so that students benefit from the program academically, socially, and financially. The researchers used data from one program that was gathered through interviews and surveys of students, parents and guardians, and guidance counselors. The research began in the summer of 1999 by students responding to a survey that was administered (Grimard & Maddaus). The total sample population consisted of 99 students; 53.5% were under 18 and needed parental or guardian permission to take part in the study (Grimard & Maddaus). Researchers randomly selected nine students from the sample and interviewed them either in small focus groups or individually (Grimard & Maddaus). The second portion of the study was conducted in the fall of 2000 by UB staff delivering surveys to 14 guidance counselors. Seven were chosen to complete interviews via phone and two of the subjects agreed to a face-to-face interview (Grimard & Maddaus). The last portion of the study took place in the autumn of 2001 (Grimard & Maddaus). Parents and guardians were the subjects; 37% of them returned completed surveys, and 15 agreed to a face to face interview (Grimard & Maddaus). The findings suggest that rural students encountered two primary obstacles in their attempt to attend college: financial and social. Guidance counselors and students indicated in the area of financial obstacles that students worried about losing out on part-time jobs and extra money that could be earned if they remained home (Grimard & Maddaus). In the area of social obstacles, students feared being away from home for a six week period, and the pressure received from family and
friends prevented some potential participants from joining the program (Grimard & Maddaus).

A limitation of Grimard and Maddaus’ (2004) study is that the sample size was limited in scope. The research focused on at-risk students in a rural community attending one summer UB program. The findings in this study may limit the chance to generalize to other institutions and summer programs. The results of such a study could be different among students who live in a city where family and friends are in closer proximity than the students in this study who were miles away from home.

Benders’ (2009) study of UB programs explored the challenges that low-income students encounter. Benders identified the priorities and life circumstances that impact students’ benefiting from the additional instruction provided in the program. The study explored the variables of family dynamics, school environment, and social environment as they relate to academic achievement, utilizing Dr. Ruby K. Payne’s additive model as the conceptual framework. Benders’ study was a cross-sectional survey design study and a researcher designed instrument was administered to 93 student participants from two UB programs using a convenience sampling method. Correlation analysis was conducted using SPSS.

Benders (2009) study, among others, has found a strong relationship between students’ academic achievement and their low-SES families (Benner & Mistry, 2007; Mittler, 1999). Students who must interact with “multifaceted environments” where they live and learn find that their surroundings do not promote equality (Benders, p. 3; Mittler). Parental interest in the education of children from low-SES families crosses racial barriers (Benders). Hollister’s (1969) study concluded that low-SES schools
demonstrate a distinct difference in school services that promote the academic achievement of students. Benders also points out that Hollister discovered that low-SES schools lack adequate educational resources and fewer certified teachers, than those schools in wealthier neighborhoods (Benders). In recent research on inequality in the school system, researchers found that the, “greater the level of racial diversity is within the school, the higher is the equality of services” (Benders, p. 3; Dupriez & Dumay, 2006). However, when researchers aggregated the school districts by family income, the disparity in education was discovered (Benders). Benders explained that Dupriez and Dumay’s study concluded that “the structure of the school system has a significant influence on the equality of services rendered, and they identified a link between family resources and student performance” (p. 4).

Benders’ research found that students from low-SES families were in need of jobs to help contribute to their families. This in turn made academics secondary in their lives and the goal of college began to suffer under the need to earn money to assist their families. Bender suggests that UB directors alter their programming and partner with local business to create opportunities for its participants for paid academically-focused employment options in order to keep students on the path to a college education.

Laws (1999) examined what impact the UB program has had on participants’ grade point average (GPA), retention rate, and math and English grades during their freshmen year of college. The sample used in this study was high school students at an UB program located at a Historically Black College and University. The study followed high school students into college in their freshmen year. The years that were selected for this study ranged from 1984–1985 to 1993–1994. The control group consisted of
randomly chosen non-UB students from the same time period. The researcher matched the control group with the experimental group (UB participants) according to gender, socio-economic status, high school GPA, and ethnicity. Success was measured by GPA, retention rate, and math and English grades (Laws). The findings suggest that the overall GPA and retention rate of UB participants were slightly higher, but not significantly different than the control group (Laws). Furthermore, findings suggest that the control group scored higher in math, whereas the UB group scored higher in English (Laws).

A limitation of Laws’ (1999) study was the sample size of 20 which was limited in scope. The small sample size of UB participants could have contributed to the mixed findings in the study. Students in the UB program can attend any university of their choice. The possibility exists that higher-performing students within the program could have chosen other colleges and universities. This could severely hamper the results that the researcher found in his study. The researcher took into account only the students who decided to remain at the home institution (HBCU) where the UB program was located. In the current study, students will be surveyed whether they attended their program’s host institution or if they decided to go to another institution. Also, there was incorrect information provided in this article. The author stated that the UB program was for students who would be “categorized within the lower socioeconomic strata” (Laws, p. 140). It is true that before 1985, students who wished to become participants in this program had to come from a low-income family. However, since 1986, regulation has changed to include students who are low-income (67% of participants must meet this requirement) and of first-generation. This means that the last one third or 33% of participants in the UB program can be from either a low-income family or be a potential
first-generation student. This means students could conceivably come from a high-SES background and be part of a family where she or he will be potentially the first to graduate from college with a baccalaureate degree. The author missing or failing to mention if he controlled for this variable brings into question his understanding of how students are chosen to become participants. This could be a possible threat to internal validity of this study if the researcher has wrongly assumed that all UB students are from a low SES. In the current research, the program that will take part in the study will have data on whether former students were low-income or first-generation students.

**Evaluation and Effectiveness of Summer Component of Upward Bound.**

Throughout the history of this nation, academicians, administrators, scholars, and teachers have created models to aid disadvantaged students’ pursuit of higher education (Simpson et al., 1997). The resources provided by institutions and programs to increase the success rate of low-income students in higher education include introductory courses that teach basic skills and inform student’s about campus resources, and labs dedicated to improving students’ academic skills (reading, writing, and math) (Simpson et al.). It is in this spirit that administrators created the summer bridge programs that range in duration from a single weekend to eight-weeks as a means to aid students’ transition into college (Simpson et al.). Although there have been many studies conducted on standard UB programs, the summer program component has been generally overlooked. UB summer programs consist of six-weeks of course work in the core subject areas of math, English, science, and foreign language. Programs implement a number of workshops that assist students in preparing for college; topics include completing financial aid, and college applications, how to write a college application essay, test preparation, study skills, note
taking, and developing a portfolio. In addition, the summer program encompasses traveling to and touring local universities, businesses, and museums to expose students to these areas. Finally, a summer trip to a city selected by the program is arranged for students to gain cultural and learning experiences that are unique to the city.

There are programs that focus on academics or on particular subjects, such as writing or math. Other programs are designed to work with students regarding academic and social well-being. However, with the wide variety of programs across the country, in general the objective of the programs is to expose and familiarize low-income and first-generation students with college-level coursework (Garcia & Paz, 2009). The goal of the program is to instill the importance of matriculation by providing students with the necessary tools to be successful academically and socially (Garcia & Paz). The Summer Bridge program brings together peers who are going through similar adjustments and come from the same socio-economic or family educational background (Garcia & Paz). Garcia and Paz’s review of the literature was inconclusive as to whether these programs are meeting their objectives. Although, summer bridge programs appear to have a positive impact on their participants, Garcia and Paz found that the evidence that is currently available in the literature suggests institutions are not diligent in their efforts to critically, consistently, and comprehensively evaluate such programs to determine whether they are meeting the needs of their students (Garcia & Paz).

In two studies that discussed the viability of summer bridge programs, Lauridsen (1982) found at the University of Berkeley’s summer bridge program that students were more persistent when they were allowed to “‘self-appraise’” their strengths and weaknesses in the area of academics (Simpson et al., 1997). The findings showed that
minority participants in the program outperformed non-bridge students in math and science by a grade point (Lauridsen; Simpson et al.). Lauridsen’s findings suggest that bridge programs that focus entirely on academics may yield poor results (Lauridsen; Simpson et al.). The UB summer program’s goals are to integrate students academically and socially into an institution of higher education (Lauridsen; Simpson et al.). Both components are deemed to be vital to ensure student success in higher education. Scherer and Wygant’s (1982) study had mixed results. The researchers in this study examined a voluntary summer program for freshmen who were accepted on a conditional basis (Scherer & Wygant; Simpson et al.). The students lived in the residence hall, had planned activities and, tutorials, and took academic courses in reading, writing, and math skills (Scherer & Wygant; Simpson et al.). The study found that a little more than half were in good standing by spring quarter, and mean GPA for the entire control group was 1.98 (Scherer & Wygant; Simpson et al.). In addition, the findings suggest that students who took part in career planning gained the most benefits from the program, but felt stigmatized by their participation (Scherer & Wygant; Simpson et al.). This may have been a result of the group being singled out for additional services, which left the impression that they may be struggling more than their peers.

In a recent study, Strayhorn (2011) addressed the gap in the literature concerning whether or not summer bridge programs are beneficial. The summer bridge program is a very important component of Upward Bound. This is the time when students experience the chance to reside and take classes on a college campus for a few weeks to gain valuable insight into what it takes to become a college student. Strayhorn’s study suggests that summer bridge programs positively affect academic self-efficacy and
academic skills, such as using technology and understanding a syllabus (Strayhorn). The study further suggests that a positive belief about academic skills and pre-college aptitude positively predicts students’ grades in the first semester in college (Strayhorn).

**Upward Bound Director.** There have been studies that related to student outcomes regarding ethnicity, gender, geography, and race that have been conducted by those interested in the UB program. However, there is a gap in the literature concerning perceptions of UB directors and how they perform their jobs. In terms of an UB program, directors must attempt to navigate their projects through the ever-changing landscape they encounter.

Today, UB directors, as any director of a department at a college or university, play a vital role in their institution (Mercer, 1997; Rosser, Johnsrud, & Heck, 2003). The directors are increasingly held accountable to achieve measurable outcomes, compete for miniscule resources, and gain the trust of the public who have grown more skeptical of the institution of higher education (Rosser et al.). Directors have the ability to select the goals they believe are necessary to achieve their program’s objectives (Rosser et al.). This gives directors, deans, and program specialists tremendous influence on what road to chart for their respective departments (Rosser et al.). Directors must meet several criteria in order to achieve success in their role as project and program leader. The literature indicates that a program director must have a combination of the following items in no specific order:

- Political Skills (Ferris, Davidson, & Perrewe, 2005).
- Grant Writing Skills (Henson, 2003).
- Financial Management/Budgeting Skills (Ferris et al.).
• Personal Management Skills (Clagett, 1997).
• Staff and Student Recruitment Skills (Astone & Nunez-Wormack, 1991; Thomason & Thurber, 1999).
• Writing and Oral Skills (Clagett; Henson)
• Educational Attainment (Matthews, 2010).
• Leadership Skills (Ferris et al.; Val & Kemp, 2012).
• Experience with Underrepresented Groups (Donnell, Edwards, & Green, 2002; Thomason & Thurber).
• Learning Outcomes (Association of American Colleges, 2008).

As a leader of a group, whether in a business, nonprofit, educational institution, or some other agency, one must possess the ability to influence others (Ferris et al.). The ability to influence individuals to go along with an idea or support a cause or program is the nature of political skill (Ferris et al.). Leadership was defined by Graham (1997) as “the ability to move a group towards a common goal that would not be met if a leader had not been there” (p. 28). There are three leadership styles: autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire. Autocratic leadership is when, a leader, after making careful observations of a situation, solves and makes the decision for the majority of the group (Dessler & Starke, 2004; Val & Kemp, 2012). Democratic leadership is when the leader consults the group and gathers their suggestions; however, he or she will make the final decision in the matter (Dessler & Starke; Val & Kemp). The laissez-faire leadership style consists of the group working out the issue without guidance from the leader on the issue (Dessler & Starke; Val & Kemp). The leader under this style has a very “hands off” approach to the issue at hand (Dessler & Starke; Val & Kemp, p. 29). The leader must possess the ability
to interact with different people to read a variety of situations, and basically, “Being able to influence others at work through persuasion, orchestrating support, and inspiring trust and confidence is the essence of political skill” (Ferris et al., p.4).

The political skills that a director must develop for this position are important because of the landscape of more and more institutions losing programs. Directors must remain vigilant and stay in contact with local congressional representatives and continue to lobby for their programs. Directors, more than ever, must keep their respective communities, parents, and institutions abreast of all of the student outcomes to demonstrate that the program is essential in the community. Managing a staff becomes troublesome when rumors of more program cuts come out of Congress. A director must keep his or her staff enthusiastic to continue on and to ensure that everyone puts the students first in this climate. This is extremely difficult when people are concerned about their families and whether or not they will be employed in the near future.

Money has tightened in the area of grants; however, there are still many opportunities for an institution to win awards. A successful grant can bring “prestige, programs, equipment, travel, and time” (Henson, 2003, para. 1). Grants can provide the opportunity to pursue “the kind of research, teaching, and service” that many enjoy most (Henson, para. 1). The UB program requires a director to write a grant proposal every four to five years to either be awarded a new program or to retain the current program. The pressure to write such a proposal when the livelihood of the staff is at stake and there are 50 or more students and families in the program depending on the resources can be immense. The ability to write a clear, concise, technically sound grant is a craft (Henson). Programs and prospective programs can lose significant funding, if not all of their
funding, because of a lack of attention to details for this particular skill, which is essential
to continue serving low-income students.

Learning outcomes are an important aspect of a program that a director must be
accountable for to the program’s stakeholders. The UB program is funded with tax payer
dollars. That makes the director accountable to the institution, target school, general
public, and most of all, students and parents of the program (Association of American
Colleges, 2008). A director must demonstrate evidence that students have met the
program’s learning outcomes to show that dollars are being well spent. This is reflected
by the objectives set forth by the Department of Education and the program meeting the
requirements. However, the lack of consistent evidence of student learning outcomes has
led to an “accountability ideology” sweeping the country and “capturing the allegiance of
many lawmakers of both major (political) parties” (Association of American Colleges, p.
1).

In the areas of recruiting and retaining low-income students in the UB program,
staff must be in place that will be empathetic to the plight of the students. Directors and
their staff must keep in mind that recruitment must respond to the specific needs and
barriers of the group they’re seeking (Astone & Nunez-Wormack, 1991; Thomason &
Thurber, 1999). The director and staff must keep in mind and go where the students are
located and have creative and unique ways to bring in students (Donnell, Edwards, &
Green, 2002). Examples include going to middle and high school classes, career and
college fairs, holding lunch visits, and having booths set up at high school games and in
the community, such as at community centers (Donnell, Edwards, & Green; Lee, 1991;
Thomason & Thurber; Simon, 1993).
Research specific to the managing of a non-profit program such as the UB program has not developed one comprehensive theory to accurately explain the factors that may influence successful outcomes among directors of these projects. There are a plethora of studies that have been published utilizing organizational theory and management; however, “most academic theories have little relevance to small, community-based organizations with small budgets, small staffs and big visions” (Philbin & Mikush, n.d., p. 3). In Kathryn Barzilai’s (2007) article, an organizational culture was defined as “a cognitive framework consisting of attitudes, values, behavioral norms, and expectations shared by the organization’s members” (Barzilai). Organizational cultures assist a business in establishing an identity for its employees, which can help internalize a company’s organizational goals (Barzilai). Barzilai touched upon three broad concepts: individual processes, which include motivation theory, personality theory, and role theory; group processes, including working in groups, communication, leadership, and power and influence; and organizational processes, relating to organizational structure, and culture. All the elements mentioned (i.e. political skills, financial management, grant writing skills, writing and orals skills, etc. etc.) and merge them together makes one an effective leader for any company, group or other entities. However, when outside forces come in to play, such as a community’s or nation’s economy, a leader must be able to adjust to the new realities the company, group or program will encounter.

The economic downturn of 2008 has made the job of director in a UB program all the more difficult. The constant threats of further budget reductions or possible elimination of a UB project has increased the job turnover rate because uncertain job security leads to low morale. In Michigan, 23 institutions that had UB programs went into
the grant award competition in 2012; however, only 17 of those institutions had their programs refunded (A. Vialpando, personal communication, May 8, 2012). Today, many low-income students who are capable and high achievers are not enrolling into selective colleges that would overall be much cheaper for their families than attending non-selective or less-selective universities (Hoxby & Avery, 2012). The UB program can assist families concerned with the cost of college, and help families make better financial decisions on where to send students. The loss of programs makes it more likely that this message will be lost for the ever-growing number of low-income students deciding where to attend college.

**Summary.** The literature in this section describes what the UB program is and how the program has changed over the years. The program has focused on providing access and resources to low-income students to succeed in higher education. The rationale of the study is to examine the perception of a director, former students, and an administrator regarding how the program director operates the program to ensure that the project meets and exceeds the major objective set by the Department of Education: that students graduate from a college or university within six years. Students’ perceptions and the administrator’s perceptions, along with program data, will either verify the director’s perception or highlight differences regarding social and academic integration occurring with former students enrolling into college. Research specific to the managing of a non-profit program such as UB has not developed one comprehensive theory to accurately explain the factors that may influence successful outcomes among directors of these projects. Project directors of the UB program must provide the resources and direction for their students to succeed academically and graduate with their baccalaureate degrees.
Therefore, the model that will guide this study will be Lewin et al autocratic leadership model. Lewin’s model is well aligned with the research questions and the program presented in this case study. In addition, the researcher utilizing Lewin’s model will help define the categories of data evidence of impact the director has had on the students and project.

**Theory**

Directors of the UB program must contend with the strains of a limited budget and uncertainty that plagues their department, determining whether they will have job security. The constant threats of program elimination make it difficult to maintain high morale in the department. The model that will guide this study will be authoritarian-leadership style. The program in this case study throughout its 15 years does not have the full-time staff other UB programs engage. The limited staff in the MU program generally consists of part-time tutors, mentors, and volunteer assistants, making authoritarian-leadership style appropriate for this model.

**Organization Theories**

Researchers studying the management of a nonprofit program such as the UB program have not developed one comprehensive theory to accurately explain the factors that may influence successful outcomes among directors of these projects. A plethora of studies have been published using organizational theory and management; however, “most academic theories have little relevance to small, community-based organizations with small budgets, small staffs and big visions” (Philbin & Mikush, n.d., p. 3). The definition for an organizational culture in Barzilai’s (2007, para. 39) article was “a cognitive framework consisting of attitudes, values, behavioral norms, and expectations
shared by the organization’s members.” Organizational cultures assist business leaders to establish an identity for employees, which can help in internalizing a company’s organization goals (Barzilai, 2007).

In Barzilai’s (2007) article, the author attempted to summarize key concepts in organizational theory, exploring three broad concepts: individual processes, which includes motivation theory, personality theory, and role theory; group processes including working in groups/communication, leadership, power, and influence; and organizational processes, as they relate to organizational structure and culture. Barzilai detailed organizational development, which was born out of organization theory. However, the author did not use sufficient numbers of past studies to illustrate each concept. In contrast the author presented one example in discussing group processes, including an example of a study conducted throughout the decades of the 1930s and 1940s held at the Western Electric’s Hawthorne Plant. This experiment demonstrated that in a “controlled setting the role of informal groups on productivity, and that the effects of group culture in work environments could have positive or negative consequences” (Barzilai, 2007, para. 26).

The Newstrom and Davis (1993) text contained an extensive overview of behavior in organizations. This text is approximately 20 years old, but the information is relevant today to examine organization development (OD). Cummings and Worley (2001) defined organization development as “a process that applies behavioral science knowledge and practices to help organizations achieve great effectiveness, including increased financial performance and improved quality of work life” (p. 2). Organizational behavior (OB) is the study and application of knowledge about how people, individuals, and groups act in organizations. It does this by using a systems approach; that is, using a
systems approach one can interpret people–organization relationships in terms of the whole person, whole group, whole organization, and whole social system. The aim is to build better relationships by achieving human objectives, organizational objectives, and social objectives. According to Newstrom and Davis (1993), OD is the systematic application of behavioral-science knowledge at various levels, such as group, intergroup, or organization, to bring about planned change. The objective is to attain a higher quality of work-life, productivity, adaptability, and effectiveness. Leaders using OD accomplish this goal by changing attitudes, behaviors, values, strategies, procedures, and structures so the organization can adapt to competitive actions, technological advances, and the fast pace of change in the environment. Newstrom and Davis offered the seven characteristics of OD provided in Chapter 1, concluding that because problems can occur at one or more levels in the organization, strategies require one or more interventions.

Researchers mainly analyze organizational theory as it relates to businesses and groups; however, it can be used in other areas, such as politics. In Johns’s (2006) article, the author examined ways to research and better contextualize organizational theory as it relates to and impacts OB. Citing Rousseau and Fried (2001), “contextualization entails linking observations to a set of relevant facts, events, or points of view that make possible research and theory that form part of a larger whole” (p. 1). This study would have been more effective if the researchers became more adept in reporting “contextual information that has theoretical bearing on their results or that might be useful to others (e.g., meta-analysts) in the future” (Johns, 2006, p. 403).

The context to OD was born from Lewin’s work (Lewin et al., 1936; Liden & Antonakis, 2009). Many scholars (Johns, 2006; Liden & Antonakis; Rousseau, 1985;
Rosseau & Fried, 2001) indicated that organizational contexts are pivotal factors in behavior that occurs within any organization. Fiedler (1967) developed an early model based on Lewin’s work (Liden & Anonakis, 2009). Fiedler’s study concluded that leadership style depends largely on context. In another study, House and Mitchell (1974) contended that leadership styles can be adjusted to fit any situation (as cited in Lidon & Antonakis, 2009). However, since the 1980s, scholars have criticized Lewin’s work, surmising that Lewin’s notion of change is only relevant for minor changes in an otherwise stable environment (Burnes, 2004). Critics believed Lewin ignored the role politics and conflict can play in an organization (Burnes). However, I argue that Lewin’s work continues to be relevant.

By rejecting these criticisms, and by revealing the nature of his approach, this chapter has also shown the continuing relevance of Lewin’s work, whether in organizations or society at large. The need to resolve social conflict has certainly not diminished since Lewin’s day. Nor can one say that Lewin’s approach seems dated, based as it is on building understanding, generating learning, gaining new insights, and identifying and testing solutions (Bargal and Bar, 1992; Burke, Lake, & Paine, 2008, p. 245; Darwin et al., 2002).

**Leadership Styles**

Lewin examined organizational theories and also considered the various types of leadership styles in an organization and how leadership style could positively or negatively impact an organization. Schoel, Bluemke, Mueller, and Stahlbert (2011) suggested that the “primary perspectives on the study of leadership emphasizes the behavior of leaders, that is what leaders do and, in particular, how they do it to attain
group goals” (p. 521). Building on Lewin’s leadership experiments, Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) identified three types of leadership styles when making decisions in an organization. Figure 8 illustrates democratic, delegative, and autocratic leadership styles.

Power in an organization and how it is distributed will determine the type of leadership style required to meet needs and determine how leaders make decisions (Bass, 1990; Lewin et al., 1939; Schoel et al., 2011; Yukl, 1998). A wide gulf exists between two of the leadership styles: democratic and autocratic (Schoel et al.). Democratic leaders encourage employees to offer input and implement “their own methods and polices” (Schoel, p. 522). However, in using an autocratic leadership style, the leader makes decisions without consulting anyone else in the program, department, or company (Schoel et al.). In the laissez-faire leadership style, the leader allows others to decide the course of action that should be taken.

Figure 8. Three participative leadership styles in an organization.
Normative leadership theories determine the leadership style that would be “most effective in a given situation” (Schoel, 522). Fiedler’s (1964, 1967) contingency theory argued that autocratic leadership would be most effective in situations where there is very low or high control in the organization (as cited in Schoel, 2011). A low-control situation is when the task at hand is unclear and the leader’s power position is low. In contrast, a high-control situation is when the task at hand is clear and the leader’s power position is high (Schoel). Vroom and Yetton (1973) “proposed that autocratic leadership is only effective in decision making situations” when there is a “clear structure and follower commitment and support is high” (p. 525). The particular UB program in this study had only the director as a full-time employee and the program only used seasonal part-time employees and strong commitment from students and parents to validate the autocratic model of leadership for this project.

**Summary of Theory**

Seven major TRIO programs in the United States were established over the last 50 years to assist students, from elementary school to the doctoral level, in education. The goal of all these programs is to provide these groups with access and resources to eventually become successful in higher education and matriculate. Participants in these programs are attempting to become the first in their families to earn a baccalaureate degree. The present research will examine, exclusively, the UB program, at an institution located in the Midwest.

The results of the downturn of the economy have made access to higher education more difficult among minorities and low-income students. Job opportunities have become scarce among many families in these states; although employment is improving, tuition
has continued to climb at higher education institutions throughout the country, making the job of UB directors increasingly more difficult when funding for their respective programs’ is cut or threatened (Duncan, 2011). UB directors must navigate this quagmire to ensure students receive resources and information pertaining to colleges and financial aid; they must also operate programs under ever-changing budgets and maintain their staff’s effectiveness so students receive a quality experience and can graduate from college. The next chapter will delve into the methodology of the study.

Conclusion

There are seven major TRIO programs in the United States that were established over the last 50 years to assist students, from elementary school to the doctoral level in education. The goal of all of these programs is to provide these groups with access and resources to eventually become successful in higher education and matriculate. Participants in these programs are attempting to become the first in their families to earn a baccalaureate degree. The present research will examine, exclusively, the UB program, at an institution located in the Midwest. The results of the downturn of the economy have made access to higher education all the more difficult amongst minorities and low-income students. Job opportunities have become scarce among many families in these states; although employment is improving, tuition has continued to climb at higher education institutions in these states and throughout the country. It has made the job of UB directors increasingly more difficult when funding for their respective programs’ is cut or threatened (Duncan, 2011). UB directors must navigate through this quagmire to ensure that their students receive resources and information pertaining to colleges and financial aid; they must also operate programs under ever-changing budgets and maintain
their staff’s effectiveness so that students receive a quality experience and can go on and graduate from college. The next chapter will delve into the methodology of the study and what the process will be.
Chapter Three

Method

Introduction

This chapter will be divided into ten sections. First, the researcher will discuss the methodology of this study. The researcher will then explain why a case study approach is appropriate. Other items discussed in this chapter include: survey implementation, data collection and analysis, description of participants, procedure and location, assumption and summary. In addition, the researcher will provide sections discussing limitations, significance to practice, and significance to theory. The data collection and analysis section will include interviews and data member checks. The chapter concludes with a timeline to outline the remainder of the dissertation and a summary of the chapter.

Methodology

The purpose of this research will be to examine the perceptions of a program director and her former students regarding the impact she has made on the students in the UB program. In 2012, program directors from the various TRIO programs have witnessed how the economic conditions in the United States have affected the number of programs funded. Nearly 20% of the programs in this past grant award competition in 2012 were defunded. In states such as Iowa, nearly half of the UB programs were defunded, and the hardest hit programs were projects in rural areas and HBCUs (A. Vialpando, personal communication, May 17, 2012).

The research will be a case study primarily utilizing qualitative methods. A well-done qualitative research “works from cases rather than samples, when it is opportunistic rather than systematic, when it specifies rather than generalizes, and when it struggles to
find unconventional ways of linking research to concept” (Zussman, 2004, p. 352).

Qualitative research is most useful when participants’ voice and perception about their environment is presented. Administrators and practitioners who hear directly from the participants and examine their experiences can form policies and decisions based on the information provided (Hathaway, 1995).

A qualitative study can be the best instrument to understand and analyze human behavior (Lave & Kvale, 1995). The implication is social research will benefit from being performed as field research (Burgess, 1984). Field research is based on interaction between the researcher and individuals willing to be studied. McLeod (2001) states, the “the primary aim of qualitative research is to develop an understanding of how the world is constructed” (p. 2). Silverman (2001) points out researchers who employ qualitative research for their work commonly believe they “can provide a ‘deeper’ understanding about the social phenomena” (p. 32). Mendoza (2007) finds qualitative research is concerned with how individuals ‘experience reality’ and gain a better understanding of a phenomenon that “cannot be understood through quantitative methodologies” (p. 76–77).

Denzin & Lincoln (2005) provide a comprehensive definition:

[Qualitative research is a] situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative
researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them. (p. 3)

The UB director of Midwestern University will be interviewed to discuss her perceptions of how she has impacted her students. The program director selected for this study has been at the helm of her project for 15 years. Current and former students of this program will be interviewed for the purpose to of the researcher to examine whether or not their perceptions matches that of the director and administrator. In order to accomplish the goal of learning how the director has impacted students, administrator and students perceptions will be essential to discover what level of impact she has made on students and the program. The researcher plans to interview each participant in person on campus or classroom at the target secondary school. Out of the data, several themes will shed light on how much of an impact the director has made on students and the program.

The program selected has been in existence for 15 years, and the director of the project has been in that position for the entire time. The fact that the program has had only one director will eliminate the problem of any ambiguities in the study, such as if students and administrator were referring to one director or another director. The researcher in the present study chose the Midwest area, specifically the Detroit, Michigan area, for the following reasons:

A) The researcher previously worked with three federally funded UB programs in the Ohio and Michigan region;

B) The researcher chose a city that has been devastated by the economic downturn in 2008;
C) Low-income students from Detroit, Michigan are near the bottom in many of the statistics that gauge student success such as high school graduation rate, college enrollment rate and matriculation.

The researcher is an African American male, first-generation college student, who participated in an UB program during high school. To minimize subjectivity bias in the current study findings, the researcher will not study any UB programs with which the researcher was intimately involved.

**Case Study**

Case studies are a form of qualitative research designed to gather information about a setting or individuals to inform “professional practice or evidence-informed decision making in both clinical and policy realms” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 544; Mendoza, 2007). A case study approach in a study according to Robert Yin (2003) should be considered under several conditions:

- When the focus of the study is to answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions;
- When a researcher cannot manipulate the behavior of those involved in the study;
- When a researcher wants to cover contextual conditions because he or she believes they are relevant to the phenomenon under study; or
- When the boundaries are unclear between the phenomenon and context.

In the current study, the researcher will attempt to ascertain how and why an UB Program has been successful in reaching its objectives in terms of students graduating and persisting at a college or university. This will be done by the researcher conducting interviews of key people such as the director, former students and administration. The
researcher will gather data of the program such as grant proposal, students’ records, annual reports, student evaluations. While the researcher interviews the director, administrator and former students he will write up field notes on what he observe and perceived during the interviews. In addition, fieldwork such as field notes will be taken when the researcher observes students in class, tutorials or in a UB sanctioned activity to record his observations. Maurice Punch stated that utilizing the approach of fieldwork, “the investigator engages in a close relationship during a considerable period of time with those he or she observes (Punch, 1986, p. 12). He further suggests that fieldwork is vital “because the development of that relationship is subtly intertwined with both the outcome of the project and the nature of the data (Punch, p. 12). Therefore, the researcher becomes in essence “his own research instrument” (Clarke, 1975, p. 96; Punch, p. 12).

The researcher’s years of experience with the program can assist this study by enabling the researcher to gather the appropriate data and understand the nuisances involved with the program. The case study model is appropriate for the current study because it will examine the perceptions of a program director, administrator, and students of a pre-college program. The participants’ perceptions, along with program data in this study, will be examined to gauge if the director’s perceptions matches that of the administrator, current and former students and program data collected.

A case study is a triangulated research strategy. Feagin et al., (1991) state, that “triangulation can occur with data, investigators, theories, and even methodologies” (Tellis, 1997). Stake (1995) explained triangulation as protocols utilized in a study to ensure accuracy and alternate explanations (Tellis). Triangulation is needed in research in case ethical issues arise to help confirm the validity of the process (Tellis). Therefore, in
case studies, utilizing multiple data sources, such as annual reports, grades, grant proposals, program’s surveys and budget reports would help eliminate any ethical issues (Tellis; Yin, 1984). The problem in case studies is to establish meaning rather than location.

A researcher must decide on not only research questions, but also determine the unit of analysis (Baxter & Jack, 2008). In this study, the researcher will be analyzing the director, based on interviews given by her, the college administrator, and current and former students of Midwestern University’s UB program to learn what they perceive how the director may have impacted them in terms of programming and activities that assist students during their time in UB and later college that led to graduation. Therefore, it is imperative that the researcher determine the case to be studied and treat it as a “single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries” (Merriam, 1998, p. 27). Robert E. Stake added in his description, “the case is an integrated system” (Merriam; Stake, 1995, p. 25). The case for the present study is to gather perceptions of a director, college/high school administrator, and former and current students to discover the impact the director of a UB program has had on the program and students. The director’s efforts in her program will stand out because of the poor economy in Detroit and the relatively low numbers graduating from high school. In 2007, only 25% of students graduated from Detroit Public Schools (Associated Press, 2008). In addition, Detroit was in the bottom three of the 50 largest cities in the country in graduating students (Associated Press). In a report from two years ago, 47% of the population in Detroit was considered “functionally illiterate,” although half of that number has received a high school diploma or GED (Detroit Regional Workforce Fund, 2011, p. 5). Therefore, high school graduates
considered “functionally illiterate” aren’t being taught necessary skills to go on to college or employment requiring any level of skill (Detroit Regional Workforce Fund). The numbers mentioned stand out because this is when the former students of the UB program would have graduated high school and enrolled into college. The students having come out of the Detroit Public Schools at that time can discuss their UB director’s impact by providing their perceptions in this case study on what effect she had on their college experience.

The overall goal of a case study is to provide understanding about the topic. Therefore, a case study needs to have enough description within the study to offer its audience a ‘vicarious experience’ (Merriam, 1998, p. 243). Stake explained that a thorough case study will fall somewhere along the line of “storytelling and the traditional research report” (Merriam, p. 243; Stake, 1995). The researcher will provide the voices of the director, college administrator and current and former students to tell their stories and experiences to explain the impact of the program’s director had on program and students.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

The researcher will develop a comprehensive interview guide for the interview that will be conducted with the prospective director, college administrator and former and current students (Flowers & Moore, 2003; Krueger, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Williams & Williams, 2006). According to McNamara (2009), the strength of the general interview guide approach is the ability of the researcher “to ensure that the same general areas of information are collected from each interviewee; this provides more focus than the conversational approach, but still allows a degree of freedom and adaptability in getting information from the interviewee” (para. 2). The researcher will interview the
director of a program at MU, a college administrator from the institution where the program is housed, as well as former and current students. The sample size in a qualitative study is important. A researcher wants to avoid saturation. Ritchie et al. (2003) outline several factors potentially affecting sample size:

The heterogeneity of the population; the number of selection criteria; the extent to which ‘nesting’ of criteria is needed; groups of special interest that require intensive study; multiple samples within one study; types of data collection methods use; and the budget and resources available. (p. 84)

Creswell (1998) believes five to twenty-five interviews for phenomenological study and twenty to thirty for a grounded theory study are sufficient in qualitative studies. Morse (1994) made the recommendation that at least six participants should be interviewed in a phenomenological study and approximately thirty to fifty participants for ethnographies, grounded theory studies, and ethno-science studies. Kuzel (1992) recommended six to eight interviews for a homogenous sample (p.42; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

Current and former students, who will be interviewed for this study, all come from the same UB program. Therefore, this group is homogeneous. A homogeneous sample is one in which the researcher, as in this study, chooses the participants who are alike (Patton, 2001). In this study, the students interviewed were all low-income, first-generation students who participated in the same UB program under the same director who will be interviewed. These participants belonged to the same subculture or have similar characteristics. A homogeneous sample may be chosen with respect to only a certain variable (Patton). For example, in this study, the researcher is interested in
studying the perception of a director and former students who participated in the same UB program.

The interviews will be approximately 15–60 minutes in duration. It is recommended that the duration of an in-depth interview should be between one to two hours in length (Mack et al., 2005). Interviews will be audio recorded and the researcher will self-transcribe data from the interviews. The interview a researcher engages in with a participant should be documented via audio, video, and/or backup notes (Mack et al.). In addition, it would be most helpful if the researcher states the recording time and ending time of the interview on tape (Mack et al.).

There are no set rules in what should come first in an interview or what questions should come at the end of an interview (Merriam, 1998). However, it will be beneficial for the interviewer to begin with “neutral, descriptive information about the phenomenon of interest, be it a program, activity, or experience or chronicle their history with the phenomenon of interest” at the start of the session (Merriam, p. 82). There are good initial questions to begin the interview such as: what are the major issues you found in your role as director that played a role to meeting program’s objectives; what do you provide to your students in terms of resources and time once they graduate from the program?

The program director from the project will provide the researcher a student roster list with contact information. This will be helpful for the researcher, especially, if former students in the program are attending colleges or universities out of town. The director will act as the gatekeeper in the study. Gatekeepers are important in a case study and in ethnographies because it is essential for researchers to establish rapport with these
individuals in order to gain access to informants or participants, who will provide their “perspectives about responding to an action or process” (Creswell, 1998, p. 117; Hammersly & Atkinson, 1995). However, it will be best for the researcher to contact students directly to eliminate the potential of students feeling pressure to take part in the study because a former director requests it. The method that will be utilized in this study will be convenience sampling, which involves drawing on samples easily accessible and willing to participate in a study (Teddle & Yu, 2007). This method will be cost effective for this research and save valuable time.

Research suggests an audit trail be implemented in such a study to reduce the chance of biases in the data analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Guiffrida, 2003). All interview data will be audio recorded with a microphone. The data gathered from the interviews will be transcribed, verbatim, by the researcher. The data will be analyzed by the researcher to examine potential patterns or outcomes emerging from participants’ responses (director, administrator and students). Themes will be developed from this process. All data gathered from this research will be member checked. Member checking will be done following all interviews and gathering program data. A researcher will use member checks to increase the credibility and validity of a qualitative study. Cohen and Crabtree (2006) list several strengths for one to member check:

- It provides the opportunity for a researcher to understand and assess what the respondent intended to do through “his or her actions” (para. 4);
- It provides respondents the opportunity to correct mistakes and misunderstandings. Furthermore it gives the respondents the chance to challenge perceived interpretations;
• It provides the opportunity to provide more details which was spurred on by the “playing back process” (para. 4);

• It provides the opportunity for the respondent to have a record to go along with “his or her reports” (para. 4);

• It provides the opportunity to “summarize preliminary findings” (para. 4);

• It provides respondents the opportunity to “assess adequacy of data and preliminary results as well as to confirm particular aspects of the data” (para. 4).

In this study the researcher utilizing interviews from directors, administrator and current and former students will help verify one another or possibly illustrate differences in perceptions. The data gathered in the study will help verify interviews conducted or detail differences between the perceptions of these individuals compared to what the actual data details. There are possible issues that can emerged through member checking. For example disagreements over interpretation between researcher and participant may develop and instead of confirming data results could cause more confusion (Angen, 2000; Cohen & Crabtree, 2006; Morse, 1994; Sandelowski, 1993). The goal of the respondent is to be viewed as doing a great job, while the researcher goal is to be viewed as a good scholar (Angen; Cohen & Crabtree; Morse; Sandelowski). These two goals can begin clashing, which could affect findings and results (Angen; Cohen & Crabtree; Morse; Sandelowski). In this study, the researcher will give ample opportunities for respondents to provide their perceptions and modify interpretations concerning his or her interview. In addition, the multiple sources of evidence, such as, student records, annual reports, student evaluations, student graduation rates in the program, field notes and grant
proposals, will be used to indicate whether perceptions matches the data provided by the program.

**Location and Description**

The students involved in this case study are located in the Detroit, Michigan area. The students took part in UB program activities in their target schools located in Detroit, Michigan and on a campus located outside of Detroit. Established in 1999, this UB program serves students attending two high schools. The program provides eligible participants, students who are between the ages of 13 and 19, with an intensive pre-college preparatory program. The program, which served 50 students (now 62), has two components: an eight month academic tutorial program, meeting four times per week, and an ACT prep workshop one Saturday per month at various colleges/universities. The six week summer program consists of two weeks of ACT prep (Monday – Friday) at one of the high school sites; and also includes: Math, English, Reading, Writing & Science; First Generation College Access Workshop & Financial Literacy; service projects that take place during the first two weeks. Students then spend three weeks on campus which includes weekends. This is known as the program’s UB University/Summer Academy Program. This program consists of a residential component, academic instruction courses, professor office hours, study and computer labs, and campus resources and community service projects on Fridays. The weekend programming includes social events, time management workshops, roommate cohabitation, laundry, pre and post-test assessments, and advising. The final week consists of an out-of-class learning experience — a fieldtrip to a selected city, college, and cultural tour.
In 2009, data indicated that 70% of all Michigan students graduate from high school (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2009). However, only 38% of the African American population graduated from high school (Alliance for Excellent Education). The African American population in Detroit as of 2010 made up nearly 83% of the city’s population (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013). The impact of the large percentage of students failing to graduate from high school will be economically devastating to the city. Alliance for Excellent Education (2009) estimated that the drop outs from the class of 2008 could cost the state of Michigan an estimated $12 billion dollars over a lifetime in lost wages. Studies show males are less likely to enroll into college than their female counterparts (National Bureau of Economic Research, 2013). Studies further show that minority males are less likely to enroll and graduate with a baccalaureate degree (Lee & Ransom, 2011). For example, nationally, 47% of African-American males graduate high school in 2006–2007 (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2010). In 2009–2010 the national high school graduation rates for African American males had reached 52% (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2012). The aim to have low-income and minority students’ graduate in greater numbers with a baccalaureate degree within six years cannot be accomplished without graduating these students at a larger percentage from secondary school and a concentrated effort to close the college-completion gap (Lee & Ransom).

The program, which was renewed in 2012, works within the Detroit Public School system. In 2011, Detroit, Michigan had a 62% graduation rate (Detroit Public Schools, 2011). Although the overall numbers for the graduation rate has improved, it is still far short of the 98% goal that the Detroit Public School had set for itself (Detroit Public
Schools, 2013). Other troubling numbers showed that the number of children in Michigan living in poverty had grown to over a half-million in 2011 (More Michigan Children Living, 2013). Families in the state of Michigan continue to face increasing low-wage employment, unemployment, and a number of cuts in social programs (More Michigan Children Living). According to the Kids Count in Michigan Data Book, children living in families with incomes below the poverty level grew 28% between the years of 2005 and 2010 (More Michigan Children Living). In a time when the economy in Michigan has had a major impact on people, education is viewed as a way for low-SES families to escape poverty (Dearden, 2005; Wilks, 2009).

The study will utilize one program’s director, the institution’s college administrator and current and former students who will be asked to take part in this study. The method utilized for this study to locate participants will be convenience sampling. The population needed for the program will be easily accessible because of the program’s annual report requiring the director to remain in contact with students up to six years after graduating high school.

**Assumptions**

Denzin (1989) stated that research is actually about the researcher; however, in order for the research to be of any true value the study must move beyond the researcher and researcher’s reality. My experiences within the UB program as a student and staff member do not necessarily represent the experience of others. Drapeau (2002) commented,

Subjectivity in research is a topic that has led more than once to much discussion and to many debates. For quantitative researchers, it is -and rightfully so- a
variable needing to be controlled (Gilbert, 1998). For qualitative researchers, the answer does not appear to be as simple. Some suggest maintaining subjectivity at a near zero level by sticking to the text which is analyzed (Mucchieli, 1979), thus establishing a clear connection between qualitative and quantitative research through a search for objectivity and a near-positivist perspective (Rennie, 2000). On the other hand, many researchers suggest making use of subjectivity and drawing on one’s inner experience in order to better understand the subject of a study (Rennie, 1994; Schneider, 1999). For them, distancing themselves from the subject through the use of standardized or semi-standardized methods only keeps the subject… at a distance. (para. 1; Patton, 1990)

The researcher should be introspective and honest about personal biases. To determine the biases that could compromise research, personal beliefs must be considered. Understanding what the research is susceptible to will help eliminate bias. A number of methodologists recommended several tips to help eliminate subjectivity in research (Drapeau, 2002). As Drapeau states, these include:

- Submitting research results to peers and to other experts in the field and/or comparing results with what other studies have given;
- Doing the data analysis in groups or in order to obtain consensus;
- Triangulation and other validity and reliability precautions;
- Presenting the results of a more objective, that is text-based, analysis before proceeding with subjective analysis and;
- Making use of a “discussant” during the research process. (Drapeau, para. 8; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mucchieli; Van der Maren, 1997)
Triangulation is the mixing of data methodologies, such as interviews, program artifacts, grant proposal, student records, annual reports, letter of supports, news articles on the program, student and program evaluations and program data. In this study, the researcher will use interviews and program data to help eliminate the opportunity of research subjectivity. Talburt (2003) commented that “member checks and triangulation generally establish something akin to internal validity” (p. 86). Chenail (2009) believe that pre-interview exercises can greatly help a researcher to improve their interview questions and address any possible biases that may occur (Turner, 2010). Pre-interview exercises can consist of doing a practice run through of all questions with an independent party to analyze potential interview bias. The pre-interview practice can alert the researcher for possible language issues in the question that could sway responses in one direction or can produce a particular response. In this study the researcher plans to conduct a pre-interview with one director, a former UB student and a college administrator in order to safe guard against potential biases in questions provided to potential interviewees. A researcher may not notice the bias another person recognizes, especially an independent party with no stake in the project. In qualitative studies, the researcher should consider that the respondents who will be interviewed will have their own biases. The researcher can effectively protect the study against respondents’ bias or biases. This will be done in this study by gathering data through interviews of former students and an administrator and using program data to verify or invalidate the director’s perception.
Significance for Theory

The Autocratic/Authoritarian model will guide the present research. This model will provide a lens to explore the perceptions of a director, college administrator and former low-income and/or first generation participants’ of an UB program on how her leadership impacted their experience. The model emphasizes control and authority over, in this case, the UB program, a leader to make all decisions and to assume all responsibility and credit for those decisions (Nayab, 2011). Furthermore, the leadership model takes into account issues unique to the program in this study. The director is the only full time staff member in the program. Therefore, it makes it essential that she perform some of the duties that would come out of Autocratic Leadership model such as, completing tasks in a quick manner, anticipating problems in advance and in a position to respond to any changes to external environment (Nayab, para. 6; Newstrom & Davis, 1993; Tannenbaum, R. & Schmidt, 1973; Vecchio, 1998). The Autocratic Leadership Style of managing demands that the director in this case be the “centralized chain of command with heavy involvement of the leader in all gamuts” (Nayab, para. 6).

The model is appropriate for this study because the researcher will examine the perceptions of a director, college administrator and former and current students to discover the effect of her leadership has had on the students and program. The model the researcher relied on was Lewin’s Autocratic Leadership Model. This helped the researcher to properly categorize evidence.

Significance for Practice

The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform policymakers in the Department of Education, university administrators, UB program directors, and similar
 initiatives, by gathering the perceptions of a director, administrator, and former students from the UB program about how a director perform her job within the project. The data gathered in this study will consist of the director’s, administrator’s, and students’ perceptions and program data. The role of the UB program is for its participants to become academically and socially integrated to the eventual institution chosen by the participant, and to persist and graduate from college. It is the job of the director to ensure that this is done. The current study used the conceptual framework based on a model of leadership styles developed by Lewin (1939). The model could suggest an effective theoretical framework for other programs to follow in assisting these projects to better serve the target population. Finally, this study will inform to the limited scope in the literature examining the perceptions of a director, administrator and current and former students of how the director managed her project through the constant changes in her 15 year tenure.

**Timeline**

The interviews were conducted in early 2014. The director, college administrator and former students in this study were provided a series of questions that was a part of the study. All interviews, whether conducted in person or via telephone will be scheduled at the individual’s convenience. The interviews were conducted in a private UB room at the target school. The length of the interviews ranged between 10–45 minutes, and interviews will be digitally taped, transcribed, and coded. The data was collected throughout March-April of 2014. After the collection of all data, the researcher reviewed, transcribed, coded, and analyzed director’s, college administrator and students’ interviews. Data analyses took place from April 2014 to May 2014.
Conclusion

This chapter discusses the methodology the researcher will use in this qualitative study. The data that will be gathered for this research will be interviews of a director, administrator and eight former students, and program data. The chapter includes a discussion of methods to conduct an interview. A detailed description of the program is included in this section. A timeline was provided to detail the steps the researcher took to complete this research.

In chapter four, the researcher will present the data from all interviews and themes that emerged from the interviews. In the final chapter, the researcher will present recommendations related to the findings from the interviews of the director, college administrator and students. Furthermore, the researcher will make suggestions for best practices for directors to manage their projects, Department of Education to improve on rating prior experience points during grant competition and how institutions can better serve directors of educational programs designed to bring equal access to education for low-income and or first-generation students.
Chapter Four

Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to examine the experiences of a current UB program director. Research on the UB program has tended to focus primarily on student outcomes and program outcomes. However, the one who set the program in motion to provide all of these services to students has been virtually ignored in qualitative and quantitative studies. Therefore, this study sought answers from the perceptions of a director, administrator, and from current and former students of the UB Program.

This chapter provides an analysis of twenty-one themes that emerged among the different groups based on the data from the director, administrator, and current and former students’ perceptions as Table 5 illustrates below. Furthermore, the researcher provides data from the program which would either corroborate or dispute the perceptions of these individuals on the performance of the director, such as annual reports, grades, college enrollment rates, college graduation rates, budgets, grant proposals, and other pertinent records of the program. In order to guard against biasness, the research process and the data gathered through the interviews is analyzed to provide the findings.

Furthermore, the chapter presents findings from the case study of three high school seniors, two current college students, and three graduates from college, all who were participants at one time or another of Midwestern University’s UB. The identities of the UB program, high schools, university, current and former students, administrator, and director have been eliminated or changed to ensure anonymity. The institution, students,
administrator, and director were given pseudonyms in the case study. The name reflects the identity for each student. There are three classifications of students in the case study; therefore, anyone who is currently in high school, for example, would be classified as Current Student A. A current college student would be classified as College Student A, and students that have graduated from an institution would be classified as Graduate A. In addition, the director in this study will go by the pseudonym Ms. James.

**Research Participants**

The data collected in this case study was determined by the research questions and conceptual framework which was designed to provide a greater understanding of how one director has managed the UB program under constant changes that have occurred throughout the number of years of this particular program’s existence. The case included the experiences of three high school seniors who are African American females. The number interviewed represented nearly 40% of the senior class at Midwestern University’s UB program (three out of eight students). The female/male ratio of this senior class is nearly 90% (seven out of eight). Caucasian and Hispanic students were not represented within the selected participant group in this particular case study, and when one analyzes the high school and the extremely low numbers of students from these two groups attending the two target high schools it becomes understandable why these two groups aren’t represented in this particular UB program. According to the 2012 annual report for Midwestern University’s UB program, which reports on current students and students who had been out of high school for up to six years (2001–2012), 262 students out of 265 students were African American. And, nearly 70% of (67.1%) of the participants during this eleven year period were female. The remaining group consisted
of two African American female college students, an African American female graduate, an African American male graduate, and a student from Bangladesh. Finally, the director and the college vice president are African American females.

**Open Coding**

The process to interview students, former students, a college administrator, and director took approximately 2.5 months. A number of delays ensued such as inclement weather resulting in school cancellations. Also, among the high school group, although I completed interviews with two students immediately, other interviews were postponed due to lack of informed-consent or other student scheduling conflicts.

The college group was difficult to recruit because a number of students had left school. The names and contact information I received often led to sending e-mails but receiving no responses from prospective students. I conducted telephone interviews with this group because of the distance and difficulty of arranging in-person meetings. Graduate students were fairly easy to contact and I was able to meet all but one in person.

I transcribed each interview, taking two to three hours for each transcription. I played and replayed interview recordings to discern subtle gestures such as sighs, and reread my field notes, used to record nonverbal reactions such as tapping the table, looking off to think about an incident, and eyes tearing up when recalling an emotional time. Once I transcribed the interviews, I sent transcripts by email to each participant to check for accuracy. The process of open coding involved examining the data. I analyzed the data line by line, noted any important sections, and assigned descriptive names to each section. An example of this was when a high school student spoke about the theme of the encouragement the director provided to them. High School Student A stated,
She knew that I didn’t want to be here. She know how to respond to me. But she would, she would like talk to me like “I know you don’t want to be here but just give it a try and you know we do a lot of different stuff” and she like she encouraged me to stay in the program and it, it, help because I actually enjoy Upward Bound now.

High School Student C, when discussing the theme of encouragement, stated,

I can say nothing is wrong with me, but she know that is something wrong with me. So, it’s not, no, way that I can just go on about my day without her bugging me or saying, you know, we need to talk. You know, I know there’s something going on and she will literally sit there talk to me and, you know, encourage me to do good and all of that.

These two students in their interviews both recounted times they had a problem or had a difficult period of time. They spoke about the way the director encouraged them to continue the program or work through a personal problem that was impacting them. I continued to review the raw data to link it to the research question and subquestions by

- Interpreting the data I read
- Consolidating the data,
- Identifying any patterns in the data from the interviews, and
- Integrating patterns to answer the research question.

**Themes**

In Table 3 on page 103 there are 21 themes that came out of the 10 interviews with former students, current high schools, college administrator and director. There were
a few theories that cross the spectrum of the groups mentioned, such as College Tours and Field Trips, Talk/Approachable and Life Lessons and Role Model. There were other themes from the interviews that were only unique among the particular group such as, to name a few, Encouragement, Program Experience and Giving Back to Younger Students. I will speak more about the theories that emerged from the different groups after presenting the table. The theories that came out of the differing groups such as the high school group tend to centered on emotions and feelings; the college group the theories tend to centered on academics; and the graduate group’s themes centered on their reflection as adults about their time in the program as teenagers; lastly the college administrator and director’s themes centered on programming and providing resources to assist their students in the UB project.

Table 3

Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>High School</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>Graduates</th>
<th>Administrator and Director</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme 1</td>
<td>College Tours and Field Trips</td>
<td>College Tours and Field Trips</td>
<td>College Tours and Field Trips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 2</td>
<td>Talk/Approachable Director</td>
<td>Life Lessons</td>
<td>Life Lessons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 3</td>
<td>Role Model</td>
<td>Role Model</td>
<td>Role Model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 4</td>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 5</td>
<td>Encouragement</td>
<td>Program Experience</td>
<td>Giving Back to Younger Students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 6</td>
<td>Love</td>
<td>ACT and College Student Preparation Preparedness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: All 21 themes that emerged from the study.

The high school group themes centered on feelings and emotions. As in most cases during the high school years students are going through a wide range of changes of
trying to fit in with their peers, learning about who they are as individuals, relationships and emotions. The high school students in the group that was interviewed all went through enormous changes in their lives. One student had moved from New York to Detroit. This change would be impactful to anyone at any age, but especially a student leaving everything they know just before they began high school and starting over again in a strange place amongst strangers. Another student became pregnant during her junior year in high school. The difficult decision that came about from this circumstance and the ramifications her choice would have on her young life, she would need all of the support that is possible, especially, if this is lacking in her home life. As she told her story one could hear the emotion coming through where at several points in her interview she seemed to almost be ready to break down as she reflected back to having her baby and the support she received from the director. These two examples given in this group makes it clear why the themes that emerged centered around key words such as love, help and encouragement. The students spoke about how vital it was to them to keep striving for higher education because of the support the program and mainly the director provided them. The director would not allow them to fail or give on themselves and she continued to push, support and encourage these students during their trying periods of their lives.

The college group themes centered more on the academic component of the program that the director provided. ACT and College Preparedness, Program Experience and Opportunities along with the themes that cross all the other groups such as College Tours and Field Trips, Role Model and Life Lessons were deemed as important because they were in the midst of what the program was meant to do for them, which was pursue college enrollment and graduation from that institution. Students from this group
reflected how the College Tours that the director set up for them was vital in helping them decide where to attend school. The ACT and the various workshops that were provided to this group were important because it helped put them where they currently are today as far as school was concerned. The director preparing this group for college stands out more because they’re in an institution of higher learning and a number of items she cautioned and prepare the group for is now coming to fruition. Whereas now, when the students encountered those situations they’re prepared to handle it and have strategies to get through it.

The graduate group themes as they reflect back on their time under the director was unique from the other groups because of length of time when they were in the program compared to the high school group who are current students and college student who were one or two years removed from the program. When the theme of Family was discussed amongst these former students they saw the director like a second mother who got them through some trying times when they were students in the program similar to what the high school students mentioned. One student had moved from another country and was attempting to learn and live in his new surroundings. Another student lost their mother during high school after an illness and she discussed how close the director became to her after that tragedy. The last of this group spoke of the director as his mother’s eyes and ears away from home to check and make sure he stayed on task. All three students spoke with emotions when they reflected on the director of the program. The young woman in this group, who lost her mother so tragically during high school, continued on with the support of the director to graduate high school and later from college. There were several occasions she cleared her throat almost as a way to prevent
herself from breaking down in tears as she reflected on her mother’s death. The young man who came from another country spoke of other themes, such as Role Model and Giving Back to Younger Students, in how the director was someone he truly looked up to and since his graduation from college he has created a tutorial program to help out similar students in his community. The young woman and the other male who was interviewed spoke about coming back to work for the same program to work with students and to share their experiences.

College Administrator and Director the themes were mostly unique amongst all of the groups because they had a differing perspective from the students and former students in the program. They came from the perspective of adults attempting to provide programming to students instead of receiving services as the student groups. In addition, the director had more first-hand knowledge regarding the operation of the program than the college administrator who is over one-hundred miles away from the program’s location. I believe that is why the director could speak about the students with more passion because of her day to day interaction and knowing the students’ stories. The college administrator, who was extremely supportive of the program in her interview, could only reflect on the numbers and outcomes from the program.

The themes that emerged from this study ran the gamut as illustrated in Table 4. High school students spoke of the help they received that assisted them to the point of graduation and beginning post-secondary education. The graduates and college student groups spoke of life lessons that were taught in the program by the director, such as respecting people’s time, helping others who may be struggling in school or don’t have as much, and using education to carve out a life and help succeeding generations. The
College Tours and Field Trips theme was the one that crossed each group in the study. The majority of current students gave me the sense that they were appreciative of the opportunities to travel to see new places, but one may have been unhappy about the trips being mandatory. However, in listening to the college and graduate students, I learned how impactful these tours were in their lives and how pivotal these trips were in helping them decide where they would spend the next four to five years of their lives. In their interviews, the director and college administrator illustrated how important those trips were and the work that went behind those outings.

The analysis process contributed to the researcher’s goal of establishing the emergence of themes or patterns to capture the essence of the research questions: (a) How does an UB director explain the evolution and continued existence of Midwestern University’s UB program? (b) How has the program at the institution coped with changes in budget, federal regulations, and objectives? (c) What institutional support has been provided? (d) What have been the major challenges in the program itself and in serving students’ needs? (e) How do students’ stories describe the director?

**High School Students**

In order to recruit students for this study, the director of the program sent an email to seniors and their parents explaining the study and that I planned to send an email to contact them about their students taking part in a brief interview. The director and I both believed that if she contacted them first, this group would not become resistant or ignore the email from me. Once that was completed, a few days later I emailed the students and parents and copied the director in the email exchange to introduce myself and inform them of the interview process. I quickly heard from two African American female
students who were willing to participate. Student C, who had planned to do the interview the same day, had an appointment. Therefore, her interview was conducted over a month after the first two high school students. All three high school students met with me in person at the high school for their interviews. They were the only student group whose members talked to me in person. Interviewing these students in person gave me the opportunity to see them in their natural surroundings; pick up on nervous ticks, such as tapping the table and nervous laughter; see them deep in thought about what they wanted to say; and discuss the program as it is today. The other students who discussed the director and the UB program had been in the program four to five years ago and, in some cases, over a decade ago.

The day I traveled to Detroit, Michigan to conduct the interview, the student body had an early release because of exams being held that day. I entered the building and was checked in by security. The process consisted of being screened for weapons, informing the two female African American female security guards where I planned to go, and showing my driver’s license. The director met me at the security point and took me to the office. The room was littered with college banners of HBCUs and of public and private institutions located throughout the state of Michigan. The large room had several computers and printers for students to use when they came in for tutorials, to work on their assignments, and to do research. There were several small rooms connected to the larger room for students who needed more privacy to study or for UB staff members who needed to meet with students concerning school matters. It was in one of the small rooms that I interviewed each student. Everyone was pleasant, and fruit, water, orange juice, and other snacks were available for students who came into the room. After Institutional
Review Board forms, which granted me permission to interview, were collected from each student, I took one student at a time back to the room and began the interview. Each student was advised that if there were questions that made her feel uncomfortable, she did not have to answer. All students were told that they could end the interview at any time and they could ask questions if any came up during the interview.

High School student A attended DP all four years and began this UB program during her sophomore year. The delay in her joining the program may have been a result of her not wanting to do the program in the beginning. High School student B joined after learning from a friend about the program and the help she could receive on the ACT. High School student C joined the program because of the tutoring and the chance to travel. In Table 4 on page 110 there is a brief description about each high school student who took part in this study.

**Table 4**

*High School Background Information*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Background Information</th>
<th>Why did the student join the program</th>
<th>Benefits from director/program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>African American female. Attended DPS all 4 years. Joined program during Sophomore year.</td>
<td>Aunt made her join program.</td>
<td>She became more open with people. Improved her attitude. Made her want to receive better grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student C</td>
<td>African American Female. She began the program unofficially 9th grade year.</td>
<td>A friend told her about UB and program benefits.</td>
<td>Director was a role model for her. Gained friends. ACT preparation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student B</td>
<td>African American Female. She began program in 9th grade year. Had baby at the end of junior year in high school</td>
<td>The chance to travel. She had never traveled out of her city.</td>
<td>Director kept her on the path to graduate and enroll into college. Someone to talk about issues in her life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: High School Group Background information that came out of interviews.
High School Group Themes

This section illustrates the themes that emerged out of the interviews with three high school students in this study. The themes discussed in the three interviews are shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes 1 and 2</th>
<th>Themes 3 and 4</th>
<th>Themes 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Tours and Field Trips</td>
<td>Role Model</td>
<td>Encouragement/Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk/Approachable</td>
<td>Help</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: High School Group Themes that emerged from the interviews conducted by researcher.

College Tours and Field Trips. This was a major theme that came out of the high school group. When I interviewed this group individually, they all spoke about the importance of this activity during the school year and summer program and how it gave them the opportunity to see something positive. Two of the three students indicated that these trips were the first time they had traveled outside of Detroit. A 17- or 18-year-old student who has the chance to travel to different types of institutions can find it life altering when he or she is finally standing on a college campus and it is not something seen only in a college catalog or on television. The feeling many of these students have is that they belong and this builds the confidence that college isn’t a goal that is unreachable for them. A few students mentioned that these trips were mandatory, and trying to navigate mandatory UB activities with home obligations and other work or school activities could become an issue.

This theme was not only prevalent with the current high school students, but also with the college students and graduates. The director made these trips mandatory for her
participants. She believed it was vital that her students were exposed to as many colleges and universities as possible in order for them to learn about the variety of institutions that are around and what might be the best fit for them. The UB program is designed to immerse students in college life. When taking into consideration many of the students who enter UB programs throughout the country, it isn’t unusual to find participants who have never stepped foot on a college campus. Many of the participants have never personally known anyone who has gone through the process of college or spoken to someone who was willing to discuss the process of applying to and enrolling in college and scheduling classes, tuition, loans, and the numerous other items that relate to a student attending college and graduating from the institution. These trips are to inform students and their parents about the variety of colleges and universities that can assist them in graduating with a baccalaureate degree. The college and universities visited can range from large Predominantly White Institutions to smaller Predominantly White Institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, community colleges, or private universities and religious-affiliated universities.

Throughout the interviews, it became clear how important these trips were to the students because they helped to solidify where students planned to go to school or, in the case of high school seniors, provided a clearer picture of what school would best fit them and their situations.

College Tours and Field Trips were mentioned 18 times in the three interviews conducted with the high school students. Examples from the three interviews are responses from High School students A, B, and C. High School student A said,
We talk about the, the agendas like exactly what’s going on this month if we have any college goal Saturday if we even going out of town because we have sometimes we get breaks and she takes us out to go see colleges and tours and stuff.

High School Student B said,

I say college tours like recently we were on a college tour back in February and it was just like seniors talking about what we’re going to do, how we going to do it. Like when we interact it’s not like us sitting down talking it’s basically like me asking a questions, she giving me advice or things she think I should know like I’m trying to choose between colleges right now and she was like you’re choosing the best field that’s for you and when I was asking about the scholarships and she was like well whatever colleges you get accepted to they will tell you how much money and scholarships you won.

High School Student C said,

We actually have a field trip coming up. It’s a three, well this one is called a three day college tour for April. You know we, go visit different colleges for like a three day, three days or that kind of stuff. And, (pause), it’s just (pause) we have to go pretty much, don’t have to go on all of the trips, but it’s really mandatory.

**Approachable Director.** This theme, in reference to Ms. James, the director, came out of the interviews with this group. One student had made a major life move from New York City to Detroit, another student had had a baby at the end of her junior year,
and another student was trying to learn how to navigate through the college process. Major life obstacles that would greatly impact anyone at any age become more of an obstacle for students from a low-income background because of the lack of support and resources available to students in this demographic.

Each student indicated that not only did Ms. James encourage them to approach and talk to her, but she also went out of her way to seek them out herself and talk to them about what was going on in their lives. The director showing the students that she was willing to speak to them, without being prompted by the students to do so, left an indelible mark on these students. The fact that all three of the females are African American, as is the director, may have made her more approachable because the students saw someone they could relate to. Many of the students in the study indicated that they viewed Ms. James as a role model. Having such a model to follow for four years helped these students form their perceptions about their academic identities. The idea that the students know they can talk to someone such as the director without being judged or looked down upon goes a long way in students succeeding or failing.

Talk or interacting with the director was mentioned 10 times in the three interviews with the high school students. The examples that came out of the interviews were:

High School Student A said,

She knew that I didn’t want to be here. She know how to respond to me. But she would, she would like talk to me like “I know you don’t want to be here but just give it a try and you know we do a lot of different stuff” and she like she
encouraged me to stay in the program and it, it help because I actually enjoy
Upward Bound now.

High School Student B said,

It’s like a good shoulder to lean on like doing school times, hard times and what
not and somebody just talks to you. That’s it.

High School Student C said,

I can say nothing is wrong with me, but she know that is something wrong with
me. So, it’s not no way that I can just go on about my day without her bugging me
or saying, you know, we need to talk. You know, I know there’s something going
on and she will literally sit there talk to me and, you know, encourage me to do
good and all of that.

Throughout the interviews with the high school group, I noticed how each student
tended to light up and laugh and smile when they discussed their interactions with the
director. High School Student A described the director as being “mean sometimes” and
High School Student B said the director was “Somebody you can laugh with,” while
High School Student C repeated how she “loved” the director. They all expressed and
agreed that the director only wanted the best out of her students and that the director did
not accept excuses for not trying to be better. The students in this group all seemed to
recognize that Ms. James could give one a hug if needed and could have a serious
discussion if a student wasn’t doing what was expected of him or her. However, these
students were still in the middle of and going through the program with their director. As
we will see in the next section with the college group, with a little time and distance, where one student viewed her as mean, this group viewed her as stern and ensuring they stayed on task.

**Help.** This was a theme that came out of the high school group interviews. One major theme from this group was their description of the program as a “family and friend” atmosphere that always offered help and assistance. The predominately low-income demographic in UB generally sees a higher rate of single mothers who are often away from the family in order to provide for the home. The problems that can occur with teenagers who may lack parental guidance can lead to students feeling alone, finding trouble, and lacking direction. In addition, students who come from this background often come from families where academics aren’t highly coveted and survival is more important. The director mentioned that her students often face the stress of economically needing to help their families pay bills in order to make it month to month. The students in this study indicated that the director helped them stay on the right track and out of trouble, graduate from high school, and not lose sight of enrolling into college. The student groups all indicated that they felt good because it seemed that someone out there truly cared for their well-being and kept them focused on going into college while some of their other classmates lost sight of that goal.

Although the UB program’s major objective is preparing students to successfully complete post-secondary education and receive a bachelor’s degree, a theme that emerged from the interviews with the current high school students, current college students, and graduate students is that the program becomes a second family to many of its participants, if not their only family. Throughout the interviews, students repeatedly
said that they felt the director was not only interested in how well they were doing in class, but also cared how they were doing outside of class and how things were going at home.

The three students each mentioned the world help eight times in their 5–10 minute interviews. In addition, they each made references to receiving help from the director and the services provided to them in the program. High School students A, B, and C discussed the theme of help with me:

High School Student A said,

She encouraged us like to do a lot of scholarships through the school and if we need help with anything at all just ask her She’ll try to help us with any problems we had (pause) and you know she just made us like do everything and like for us to do to try to get good grades and if we didn’t get the best grades she try to see what we need help on so we work on to improve that where we need help in.

High School Student B said,

She started telling me it’s like college preparatory, help you with your scholarships, ACT and all that. And, I’m like well I need help with that.

High School Student C said,

I get tutoring in that it would be it pretty much they will help me with my grades.

**Encouragement, Role Model, and Love.** Three other themes emerged that were different from each other. These three themes didn’t cross all groups, but were important to each student in the high school group. Students come from a variety of circumstances
and are seeking certain things from the program that they may be lacking or don’t receive at all from their home environment. One student spoke about the encouragement she received from the director that helped push her to graduate and go on to college. Another viewed the director as a role model and someone to emulate because she didn’t have that at home, nor did she have the opportunity to travel outside of Detroit until she joined this program. The last student spoke about love and how she felt the director and staff truly cared about her. When she was feeling at her lowest and thought her future was destroyed because of an unexpected pregnancy, Ms. James called her and encouraged her to continue her education; now more than ever she needed that education to create a good life for her and the baby. The first two themes emerged from the quotes below by:

High School Student A said,

She encouraged us like to do a lot of scholarships through the school and if we need help with anything at all just ask her.

High School Student B said,

I would say it’s pretty good because she’s like a good role model. Like even though sometimes I slack off I know that there still things that needs to be done in preparation towards college, ACT, applications and all that.

High School student C spoke about the theme Love. She stated in her interview that she loved the program and the director. She spoke about being on maternity leave and how the director had an earnest, heart-to-heart talk with her about her future. The student said things will be harder, but with hard work she could make it. She talked about the director telling her, “Now it isn’t just you that you must succeed for, but you must
succeed for the baby.” She discussed how the director made sure she remained on track to graduate from high school and go on to college. Knowing that she was only two months away from her goal of completing high school, her voice cracked and tears welled up in her eyes when she discussed the intimate details of her journey and how Ms. James pushed her to continue her education. Near the end of her interview, the student smiled as she struggled to hold back her tears; looking away, she stated:

I love them! They just, I just love when she, I just saw her yesterday actually, and, “Hey, Ms. James!” and she was like, “Hey!!! So how’s everything going?” She, that is one thing she always ask me is how’s everything going. You know, she makes sure that I’m on track. You know, when something wrong, she, when I, she know, she know me pretty much. She just know when something not going right. But, yes. I just love her to death.

The last three themes weren’t shared among the three students; however, they permeated the interviews they provided to me. When each student spoke about these particular themes, they all seemed to light up, and when one student became emotional, they all became more open in their respective interviews. These themes stand out because it was difficult to get this group in particular to elaborate, which may have been because of their age and the fact that they are currently involved in the program. They lack the benefit of time that the older groups have; the older study participants have had life experiences and can reflect back on their time in Upward Bound and consider what the director and the program really meant to them.
Summary of High School Themes

The findings suggest that the themes that emerged from this group, such as Help, College Tours and Field Trips, and Talk/Approachable Director may have emerged from this group because they’re in the midst of these activities as current UB students. Help was a very prominent theme because of the life-changing events that took place within this group. The major events ranged from a student having a baby to a student moving from New York to Michigan. These major life changes stood out because the director was pivotal in helping and supporting students through these difficult stages in their lives and reminding them that a college degree is even more important than ever. In the interviews, students indicated that they were soon heading off to a college tour or had just been on a tour. Therefore, these events were fresh in their minds and had made more of an impact. Each student indicated in their interviews that they were currently deciding on the institution of higher education they planned to attend. Therefore, major life decisions and other activities kept them constantly speaking to the director of the program. Unlike the other groups, they don’t have the benefit of time away from the program.

College Students

The most difficult group to recruit for this study was the current college students. There were several reasons why this group was hard to reach. Unlike the high school group and graduate group, many of the students were away attending school. The college students did not answer emails as readily as the graduate students. This may be a result of busy schedules or the use of college/university emails. As a result, only two interviews were conducted with this group and with the exception of one interview in the other student groups, the Current College student group interviews had to be recorded. In Table
6 on page 121 there is a brief description about each college student who took part in this study.

Table 6

**College Group Background Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Background Information</th>
<th>Why did the student join the program</th>
<th>Benefits from director/program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>African American female. Involved in UB program for 3 years. Current college student attending school at UB program’s host institution.</td>
<td>A friend told her about the program. She was interested in learning more about college. She had no knowledge about going to college.</td>
<td>She believed she gained an education. Met new people. Free tuition because of scholarship assistance by program’s director.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: College Group Background information that came out of interviews conducted.

As Table 7 above shows the participants in this group were both African American females who participated in Midwestern University’s UB program during the time period of 2008–2012. However, the students had more to say about the director and program than did the high school students. The same phenomenon could be seen with the graduate students, perhaps because the students were older and as they reminisced about their time in UB, they understood why the director did the activities, workshops, and other functions with them. The Current High School students lacked that perspective.

**College Group Themes**

In this section I will discussed the themes that emerged from the interviews with the college group that is listed in Table 7 below. The themes from this group emphasized academics and how they looked up to the director and the lessons learned during their time in the program.
Table 7

**College Group Themes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Tours and Field Trips</td>
<td>Opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Lessons</td>
<td>Program Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Model</td>
<td>ACT and College Preparedness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: College Group Themes that emerged from interviews conducted by researcher.

**College Tours and Field Trips.** The theme of College Tours and Field Trips was prevalent among the college group because both students indicated that their college choices were directly related to where they attend school today. The two students indicated that they had little to no knowledge about colleges before the program, let alone that there were different types of colleges such as Predominantly White Institutions, Ivy League, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, community colleges, private and public four year universities and so on. The director exposing the students to a variety of institutions in different geographical areas gave them more insight into where they may want to go to school and made them aware of institutions outside of Michigan. The eventual choices led to one of the students attending a HBCU down south; the other student attends the university that hosted this particular UB program, and she intimated that this choice was because spending her summers with the UB program on campus helped make her comfortable and confident that she could succeed in this environment. Their comments about this theme and choosing their colleges were as follows:

College Student A stated,

> Like me personally, had I had it not been for UB I would have never had those opportunities, to you know, venture off to different states and you know go to
historical sites and learn different things about different colleges. And, being exposed to historical black college life. Because right now I’m at Historical Black College. And it’s funny because I actually never would of chosen Historical Black College. But because of UB and my experience with touring HBCU’s that drew my attention or that, you know, made me understand it better that what it was that HBCUs represent.

College Student B said,

I probably would not, would not have been in college if it wasn’t for UB. I knew nothing about it. Just the network of people that I have met over the years. Like, meeting people on college tours. I still interact with some of those people today. Like, the admission officer for MU who gave me the scholarship to come here. I still talk to him today. And, then checking up on me to see what I’m doing in college, just, where am I going, and helping me to, to see my next step in my education.

During my interviews with both students, I never got the sense that they regretted their decision, nor did they give me the impression that there might be a school out there they could have attended instead of the institution they chose. The two students discussed that it was through the college tours set up by the director during the school year that gave the participants the chance to travel to these institutions. The Midwestern University UB program offered students the opportunity to walk on campus, meet students at these campuses, and soak in the atmosphere; this led both students to believe that the campuses they eventually chose was where they belonged. Although both of these interviews were
conducted via telephone, I could detect the confidence they had in their choices and the happiness they expressed as proud students at their respective campuses. In addition, I sensed the gratitude each student had at being offered the opportunity to travel with the program to see these campuses first-hand, which helped them determine whether or not the school would meet their needs for the next four to five years.

**Life Lessons and Role Model.** When this group was asked about the type of leader their director was during their time in the UB program, the adjectives they used to describe her were “strong, amazing, honest, and direct.” In the interviews with the college group, one can detect that they believed the director cared not only about their educational pursuits, but also about them as young people developing into adults. A simple question such as “How are you doing?” went a long way with students in each group. Ms. James was seen as authentic by her participants because she took the time to know her students outside of their classroom pursuits. When I reminisce over my time in the UB program, I realize that an adult telling me what I should do didn’t go as far as witnessing the director’s willingness to travel, go on tours, and walk with us on those hot days in the summer. This made me believe that he or she wasn’t simply providing lip service, but cared enough about us that they were willing to be out there with us. The director of the MU Upward Bound program provided the students the same sense: that she cared about them. The college students discussed the themes of Life Lessons and Role Model (in reference to Ms. James) by stating:

College Student A said,

I tell you Ms. James was like absolutely amazing, like with personal life and, you know, assisting me like, you know I remember one Thanksgiving she came to my
house and brought like a Thanksgiving basket like her leadership, period, was just outstanding with the program. I don’t think, she I don’t (sigh) know, to me, to be quite honest, she, her, her leadership is quite unique compared to other leadership that I’ve seen at other Upward Bounds. I would, I definitely, I, I would say that The Midwestern University’s Upward Bound program because of her it’s, it’s a program that’s just one of a kind. You know, definitely one of a kind. The interaction, the close knit, you know, family that she built under her leadership. It’s just, it’s just amazing.

College Student B said,

She is the, She is a great leader. I really admire her. That, I, I aspired to be just like her. So, I’m getting a degree in early childhood development, but I want to get my Master’s in Higher Education Administration so I can follow her footstep.

When I listened to both college students over the phone, I could sense the warmth and feelings they had toward their former director. I believe that they wanted to share much more, but couldn’t find the exact words to describe their feelings for the director and the leadership she provided for them and their peers at such a pivotal time in their lives. The student groups mentioned how often they lacked this in their homes because of the environment they lived in, or because their family was unwilling or didn’t know how to provide that to their child. The college group discussed two themes in their respective interviews, which led to the same outcome of learning to navigate through the college process and explained how the director of the Midwestern University UB program helped
teach and prepare them for the next phase in life. When discussing the themes of Program Experience and Opportunities, College Student A said,

Yeah, the experiences, the experiences was absolutely outstanding. It was amazing. I, I don’t know, it was, it was experience unique to any experience I ever, you know, encountered. It there, pretty much being a part of the program is where I found out who I was as a person. You know, what it is I wanted to do with my life. You know, prior to going to the program I had no idea how I was going to get to college, but definitely after leaving the program you know, they assisted me tremendously with going through the process of you know filling out the col… college applications, filling out scholarships things like that.

College Student B said,

Well, it was, it was very eye opening. I had a lot of opportunities come my way and I was prepared to meet those opportunities. Because Ms. James made sure that we knew what we were doing that we were prepared for what we were getting in to.

One of the college students was so impacted by Ms. James’ leadership that it helped her decide what she wants to do with her life. This student discussed how she wants to pursue a career working with students that are similar to her. She believes she can make a difference in the lives of young low-income and first-generation students, just as Ms. James made a difference in her life.

**ACT and College Preparedness.** The theme of College Preparedness may appear more important within this particular group because they are in the throes of their
college career. Several times throughout their interviews, the two students in this group discussed the importance of ACT scores, college preparation, and what they knew about navigating through the college process when they first joined UB:

College Student A said,

They (UB) also had afterschool tutoring, where they assist us with a lot of our homework we received at school. We did much in ACT prep where they assist us with you know getting higher scores on the ACT test and things like that.

College Student B said,

Like, just going to college in general. I knew nothing about college while I was in high school until I was in UB. Just trying to access to the, like, the ACT prep and tutoring and mentoring. Those types, type, of opportunities.

ACT and college preparation are vital within the program. UB programs are held accountable by the college prep coursework students in the program must take; programs earn participation points each year, and the prior year’s points are used to determine whether or not a program will be renewed. ACT scores and college preparation are major components for colleges deciding whether or not to accept a student. Therefore, students who are early in their college careers will be more focused on this theme than students who are still in high school or those who have completed college.

**Summary of College Student Themes**

The finding suggests that the themes that emerged from this group, such as ACT and College Preparedness, College Tours and Field Trips, Role Model, Opportunities, and Program Experience, were so pronounced because the students were in the midst of
these activities as recent UB and high school graduates. The students in the group took the ACT in the last year or two. In the interviews, students indicated that college tours were important in leading them to the school they were currently attending. The life lessons outside of the UB program most likely stand out because the students have the benefit of time and are now going through the process that some have been preparing for during past four years; they have come to understand why Ms. James did the activities and spoke the way she did. As college students, they recognize the importance of her lessons, such as being on time and working hard.

**Graduate Students**

In Table 8 on the following page it illustrated the unique the backgrounds of the three graduate students who completed the UB program. The background ranged from a student who was raised out of the United States; to a troubled student who lost their mother while still in high school; and to a student who looked to the program and the director as a means of getting involved with something positive.

**Table 8**

*Graduate Group Background Information*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status Information</th>
<th>Background join the program</th>
<th>Why did the student director/program</th>
<th>Benefits from</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Student C</td>
<td>African American female. Troubled teenager. Currently, in graduate school. Three years in program.</td>
<td>Mother put her into program. Friends were in program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Graduate Student Background information.
The graduate students were the furthest removed from the program and director, and one can gauge that they were the most influenced by her leadership. The three graduates that volunteered to be interviewed all have come back at some point to work with the younger students in the UB program at Midwestern University. They all wanted to give back and help students who were similar to them and were enduring the same struggle. In this group we had a student (Graduate Student A) who was born in the United States, but was raised in Bangladesh and joined the program in search of mentors to help him navigate through the difficulty of being reacquainted with his birth country. This student came back to the country in the Michigan area around his eighth grade year and had to learn to speak English and about American culture. Graduate Student B grew up in a low-income community, and his mother, who was active within the school, encouraged her son to join. Graduate Student C did not want to be in the program and was essentially forced to do the program by her parents. Just as one of the high school students mentioned in her interview that she ran from the program in the beginning, I too can relate to these students. Although my mother had explained to me the benefits of the program and how it would help me, all I could think of was going to tutoring after school instead of going home to watch television, and giving up my Saturday mornings to be on a campus learning math and science. However, like with this group, it has taken me years to discover how beneficial the program was in my life.

In this group, unlike the other groups, two males participated in the interviews along with one African American female. In addition, one student was not African American. This particular UB program is heavily populated with female participants because one of the two target schools of the Midwestern University UB project is an all-
female school. Out of the three graduate students, the two males earned bachelor’s degrees, and the female participant has received a bachelor’s degree and is currently working on her master’s degree. All three of the graduate students explained how they became a part of the program that impacts their lives, even today, by giving brief statements of what led them to become a participant in the project.

When the graduate students reflected on the impact Ms. James and the program had on them, their recollections ran the gamut. One student mentioned how Ms. James taught him about the importance of being punctual, and the idea that being late and being inconsiderate of other people’s time reflected poorly on what type of person he is. The workshops that were geared towards time management helped drive home the point of being responsible and not wasting time. Graduate Student B thought the program helped him and his peers from his neighborhood see that there is a larger world outside of the violence and despair they saw in their low-income community. He learned from Ms. James that hard work and dedication were key to becoming successful. The student reflected on how staying on a college campus for six weeks in the summer and traveling to other cities and campuses had a profound impact on his life because, until he joined UB, his neighborhood was the only thing he knew. Graduate Student C, the lone African American female in this group, reflected how the director turned a troubled and angry kid, who was not much interested in school, into a student excelling in academics. She wasn’t an angry student after she went through the program because the director went out of her way to talk to her and make her feel important and that she mattered. GSC grew into a student who looked to help other students that she saw herself in and to let them know she was there if they ever needed to talk.
Each student spoke at length when reflecting on the impact that Ms. James and the program had on them. The two male students I spoke to in person seemed to almost light up and begin smiling when they recalled their time as young teenagers in the UB program. Graduate Student C seemed to be the most emotional of the three when she thought about her time. Several times during her interview, it seemed she would cry when she thought back on her time with Ms. James. A number of times she cleared her throat when it appeared that she might cry at any moment. The passing of her mother made her bond even closer to Ms. James, who became almost like a second mother to GSC. Throughout her interview, I could feel the emotion that she spoke with when she recalled those days.

**Graduate Group Themes**

In this section I will discussed the themes that emerged from the interviews with the Graduate Group that is listed in Table 9 below. The themes that emerged from this group was unique because these former students had gone through the process of the UB program years ago and have successfully completed college. These students reflected back on their time in the program and discussed how the director influenced them.

**Table 9**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>ACT and College Preparedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Model</td>
<td>Life Lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving Back to Younger Students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Graduate Student Themes that emerged from the interviews conducted by researcher.
Family. The theme of Family seemed to be the most prevalent with this group. The interaction that the three students had with Ms. James seemed to be guided by things the students needed and were in search of. Graduate Student A discussed how Ms. James always made everyone feel like family and promoted the idea that family helped one another. He had joined the program with a friend who was also from Bangladesh, and he never once felt out of place joining an all African American program. He felt welcome, and that helped him in his adjustment to his new surroundings.

Graduate Student B believed his interaction with Ms. James was similar to having a second mother within the school. If he thought he could slack off in school because he was away from his mother that changed once he was in the UB program because Ms. James was his mother’s eyes and ears in the school building. A student who was not meeting the expectations of the program could expect a conference with Ms. James, who would inform the student that he or she needed to work harder.

Graduate Student C reflected on the many talks as “pep talks” with Ms. James. She felt she got extra attention from Ms. James because of her poor attitude, which made her rebel from the program and Ms. James at first. As time went on, Ms. James became a person GSC would seek out to talk to about issues she was having in school and in her life. This became even more true when her mother became ill during her 11th grade year and eventually passed away. She discussed how Ms. James was the one who helped her to continue on. She said that Ms. James became more to her than just a director of a program; she became her family. In these three comments, this group discusses the theme of Family:

Graduate Student A said,
Me and my friend came in at the same time and, and at the time she was really intrigued or eager to get us to join as well just because it diversified the program in a way as well I guess it was the first time that they had anyone other than someone all, all African American people there. So and again, I just love the program as a whole she was very welcoming as, as, all the other staff. And, very helpful that transition because me and my friend had to go through both of our parents we’re the only one is to take us after school in this area and things like that. So, they helped us through a lot.

Graduate Student B said,

I had a lot of opportunities to interact interact with Ms. James. She was I, I feel like an extra parent inside the school. She kept me on task with my schoolwork like throughout or through the program, she would check us, check up on us with report cards so it was a good experience interacting with her because I felt like I needed the extra help in school and she was there to provide it.

Graduate Student C said,

She, she know how to pep talk with me (clears throat) because of, you know my attitude. And, when I was in the 11th grade my mom got ill. So I was really having a hard time with that and even when my mom passed away, you know, she was always there. Like, even when I graduated from high school, she always made sure that she could stay in contact with me. You know, she never lost that contact. So I had a lot of one on one conversations with her. Which helped a lot (clears throat). A lot! (nervous laughter).
Role Model and Giving Back to Younger Students. The graduate students all spoke about the way the director ran the Upward Bound program. They all indicated that it was well organized. The manner in which she implemented staff into the program and dealt with students seemed to have impressed this group when they thought back to their time in the program. They were each inspired by her work, and chose to model themselves after her and help younger students in the program or community. Graduate Student A was so impressed by the way Ms. James ran the Upward Bound program that after he graduated from college, he began a tutorial program and modeled it after the Midwestern University UB program. GSB and GSC both came back to work with the students in the program during the summer. They stated:

Graduate Student A said,

You know what since I left UB I’ve been doing my own tutoring program that I, I in the community that I’m at Teno Madre. I honestly have been stealing some of Mrs. James organizational skills and things like that I could use. And, currently I’m working for an after school program. So basically I took everything I learned as a student and as an employee of the UB program and basically incorporated into what I do now. So, I gained a lot as far as the information, I don’t think me, if I wasn’t in this program I think my life probably be a lot different.

Graduate Student C said,

Even just flattered to allow me to come back and be a staff in the summer program. I can be that one to encourage the student, you know. Because I know
exactly, a lot of the things that they go through as teenagers. And, just the encouragement that they need and just telling them that, you know, giving up won’t get you anywhere, but hard work will (Clears throat).

**ACT and College Preparedness.** ACT was a theme that was mentioned from two of the three participants in this group. GSA mentioned that one of the main reasons he joined the program was because of his desire to score high on the ACT. He thought the test was so important that he attempted it his freshman year. He received a good score in his first attempt, but he wanted to boost his score; hearing about the ACT prep component of UB was one of the items that drew his attention to the program. The other male student saw the ACT component as important, but it wasn’t a major reason for joining the program. He and his mother thought he needed someone to keep him on task with his grades and going to classes. The third student’s themes seemed to fall along the lines of what she needed emotionally. She mentioned in her interview that she had an attitude problem because of what was going on in her home environment. In addition, she had to deal with a mother who was ill and eventually died during her junior year in high school. Therefore, she had a lot of emotional turmoil taking place in her life, which made academics somewhat secondary. Graduate A and Graduate B discussed the theme of ACT and College Preparedness. Graduate Student A said,

> At the end of my freshman year I did take the ACT and I did good on it, not great, but I did good on it and she was surprised at the score that I got so she was expecting me to do that but they everyone gained confidence in me, after that because I did pretty well to be a freshman to get the score that I did get. So I talk
with her about that, about focusing on the ACT about how I wanted a higher score.

Graduate Student B said,

They (High School Counselors) didn’t really inform us on certain things. But Ms. James and the UB program they took time out like ACT prep SAT, college application, and a Financial Aid workshops and things like that.

**Life Lessons.** Graduate students A and C talked at length about the life lessons they picked up from the program. Graduate Student B didn’t speak of any life lessons he received from the program, although he was extremely grateful for the program. GSB seemed to be somewhat shy and more guarded than the others when he spoke. GSA and GSC were more open and willing to talk about themselves and the struggles they went through at that time in their lives. GSA was a student coming from another country, culture, and customs, and had to adjust to a large city and school in the Midwest. GSC had to adjust to life without the most important person in her life and overcome negative family members in order to succeed. She spoke at length about how Ms. James was her life-line and that she couldn’t imagine where she would be today without Ms. James and the UB program.

The life lessons they learned ranged from time management, helping others, perseverance, and overcoming adversity, to believing in yourself when people around you doubt you at every turn. GSA often laughed and smiled during his interview when he thought about the student he was when he joined the program. He described a student who was self-absorbed and thought only about himself. In addition, because of the
culture he came from and the barriers his family encountered returning to America, his family stuck to themselves. Therefore, he had to learn to open himself up to meeting new people and learning new things. GSC described herself as closed up, angry, having an attitude, and lacking self-esteem and confidence due to years of her family questioning her ability and telling her she couldn’t reach her goals. Her interview was on the phone, which may have led her to be open because she wasn’t in the room with me, or she may have felt comfortable enough to discuss the obstacles she had to overcome in life in order to be where she is now. The two students commented on the Life Lesson theme by saying:

Graduate Student A said,

She just flat out told me, “Hey, listen you’re doing great, I understand. But we want everyone to work as a team here. So, why aren’t you helping everyone else?” And, I took that to heart that night we were at the computer lab. And, we were missing out on our fun activities because everyone was behind in their studies, everyone not everyone, but most of the kids were behind in their studies and things like that. So, and, I’m the type of guy, I wanted to get my work done as fast as I can. I wanna spend as much free time as I can playing basketball, playing whatever, any type of group activity. So (sigh), that night we were at the library at Upward Bound, and I remember the building too. So, we were there I finished up my work and literally went around one person at (school bell sounds) a time and help everyone that needed help just so, just so, we can finish, go out there and play and things like that.

Graduate Student C said,
I know before the program, honestly, I could not see pass my neighborhood. I didn’t know many opportunities like college because I’m the first in my family to go. And, (Clears throat) just like with my family they were, you know, very negative toward me. They always told me that I would never be anything at, in life. And, just different things like that. So, and your family, your older siblings and you believe them. Well, you know, I believe them for so long. Then you have someone like Ms. James who told me different.

**Summary of Graduate Student Themes**

Out of the three student groups, the graduate group spoke most at length about Ms. James’ leadership style. The process of going through college, along with the time and distance away from the program, helped the graduate students understand the actions of Ms. James. On the other hand, the high school students hadn’t yet gone through the process of college, and the current college students were at the beginning or middle of the process in hopes of reaching the major objective of the UB program: graduating from a postsecondary institution with a baccalaureate degree. The graduate students had the advantage of time and could truly reflect on Mrs. James, her leadership style, and how she impacted them. During his reflection of Mrs. James’ leadership style, the life lessons he learned, and the impact of the program on him.

Graduate Student A stated,

There were times where students weren’t doing well. And I went to Mrs. James and told her, “Hey listen, it’s not, it’s not me that, it’s not my fault that everyone else is struggling with the work that this teachers are giving them.” and things like that. And, she just flat out told me, “Hey, listen you’re doing great, I understand.
But we want everyone to work as a team here. So, why aren’t you helping everyone else?” And, I took that to heart that night we were at the computer lab. And, we were missing out on our fun activities because everyone was behind in their studies, everyone not everyone, but most of the kids were behind in their studies and things like that. So, and, I’m the type of guy, I wanted to get my work done as fast as I can. I wanna spend as much free time as I can playing basketball, playing whatever, any type of group activity. So (sigh), that night we were at the library at Upward Bound, and I remember the building too. So, we were there I finished up my work and literally went around one person at (school bell sounds) a time and help everyone that needed help just so, just so, we can finish, go out there and play and things like that.

Graduate Student C, who had the more emotional story of losing a mother during her high school years, trying to come out from being the negative young teenager, and becoming confident in herself, described coming from a family that was often negative towards her. When listening to GSC, one can understand why she came into the program. With the exception of her mother, everyone in her life told her that she couldn’t succeed in college, and she lacked a role model who had done what she set out to do: enroll in and graduate from college. I’ve witnessed many students who have gone through the obstacle of negative family and friends constantly telling them they can’t do it. This can be very difficult to overcome, and in some cases, insurmountable. However, the director was the constant voice of positivity and belief that with hard work, GSC could achieve all of her dreams as long as she was willing to work.
College Administrator and Director

Of all the groups and individuals who took part in this study to be interviewed, the college administrator at this institution was probably the most unique. This individual isn’t on-site with the current students as the former students and director are on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, in many ways, the person who serves in this position can’t help but be somewhat disconnected from the ins and outs of the day-to-day activities of a program that is 150 miles away from her workplace. She had a unique perspective because she was on the periphery, watching the program grow and develop over the past 15 years. Although in the interview she intimated that she has been in her current position for two years, she has served as the Interim Vice President of Student Affairs on three different occasions. She has been at her institution for 16 years and has been connected in some capacity to the UB program for the entire duration of the program. In her last two years, she has acted as the supervisor of the director of the UB program.

The director of the Midwestern University UB program has been at the helm of this project since its inception in 1999. She had to develop and create the program from scratch. I found Ms. James to be very direct and honest. I almost felt like the interview was therapeutic for her; it gave her the chance to voice displeasure with certain aspects of running the program for fifteen years, and allowed her to discuss not only her proud moments but also the number of trials and obstacles that came her way. She was proud of the fact that for the past several years, she has had a 100% high school graduation rate, a 90% college enrollment rate the fall following graduation from high school, and has seen a number of students become successful college graduates.
Unlike the majority of her students she grew up in a two parent household. She described her family as lower middle class. She recalled that she took family trips annually; they had plenty of food for the holidays and her family always having a new car. However, she does recall times where there was no heat or water. The director’s value of education came from her mother. She described her as the enforcer. Her mother praised her children for good grades and if they fail to meet the standards set they had to face consequences.

She recalled when the time came for college she went out to apply to schools on her own. Although, her mother helped completed financial aid and other pertinent information, she was the one who had to make the initial contact. She knew in her family she had to go to college or in the military. She recalled she often struggled in school. When she looks back at that time in school and college she said she didn’t know how to study. She really saw how she was in her school work when she transferred from public to a private high school. She said she now knows she knew what to do and how to do it, but lacked self-efficacy. Self-Efficacy is an actual or perceived threat to one’s personal safety, or one’s ability to deal with potentially aversive events (Bandura, 1983).

Although she struggled in college, she was the only one from her peer group to graduate from college. All of her friends became pregnant or dropped out of school. After graduation, she began working with students. She kept hearing from students and parents alike how they wanted to attend college, but often found that they were unprepared academically, financially and emotionally for the rigors of college. She saw this as a challenge to inform students and parents about the college process. She believed that investing in college was essential to give one options in their future. She took
employment in admissions, residence life as a hall director, a substitute teacher, all the while going to school and receiving her Master’s degree. Through her work and life experiences she witnessed firsthand the problems that were plaguing low income students. The director stated,

The educational system in urban areas does not favor economically challenged students, especially black students. Families needed information on how to navigate through a system designed for them to fail. I simply wanted to make a difference.

When Ms. James was first hired as director, the VP of Institutional Diversity told her, “here is the grant, now make it happen.” This was not only a brand new experience, but also a unique one because her program was hundreds of miles from its host institution; most programs either provide services at the host institution or are within a few miles of it. Then she had to learn how to navigate and remain compliant to the Department of Education, her university’s policies, and the policies of her two target high schools.

Creativity. The Vice President analyzed the evolution of the program and looked at the challenges the director faced navigating through the changes from the Department of Education during the decade and a half that the program has existed at the institution. She intimated that the director’s job has increasingly become more difficult in that she must do more with less. She expressed that she isn’t very knowledgeable about policy and the constant changes that come from the Department of Education. Generally, the director keeps her and the institution updated on this type of information via meetings, emails, and phone calls. The one item that she discussed at some length during her
interview is how dollars are being stretched to serve more students with the same amount of money that at one time served 20% fewer participants.

The director spoke at length about being creative and the ability to complete tasks when it is necessary to stay compliant with the Department of Education, but at the same time be flexible for her students, parents, and target school administrators. The idea of being creative has become even more important due to the constant budget uncertainty that has plagued the program for the past decade. This tightrope that many directors must walk to be all things to all people can be very difficult. Scheduling meetings in the morning and late in the evening is important to accommodate parents who work during the day, but needing the building facilities to hold the meeting means receiving the principal’s permission. In addition, it is often necessary to meet with students in the morning or during lunch time because the students may need to work after school or make sure they get their younger siblings home while their parent(s) are out working:

The director and the staff of the Upward Bound program has had to yet to be very creative and building partnerships and relationships within the community and with other organizations in order to supplement that funding and that funding that disappeared due to cuts within the UB budget.

One creative thing that we did this year because, you know, we needed tutors and we needed administrative help and just help in the building we worked…..we wrote for an Ameri-Corp, grant and received it and so we were able to, you know, the leverage the…that support in terms of having another human resource in the, in the building and in the program.
Developing Partnerships. Ms. James discussed how she has made it her mission to build stronger partnerships with groups, individuals, and departments at her host institution in order to provide the top notch services and resources her students need to succeed. She explained how technology has become important for everyone involved in the program. Technology has become a vital method in contacting students and disseminating information to participants, parents, and staff. Where once upon a time, traditional mail and phone calls were the only method in contacting students, now, if a director isn’t on top of social media and technology, they will miss out on communicating with a significant number of students in the program. The importance of partnering up with the IT department at MU has made using the latest in software and technology a draw in bringing students into the program and keeping them interested, because low-income and first-generation students may not have this technology available at home. Having technology readily available for the students in the program, instead of the participants going to crowded local libraries and other facilities, has made it convenient for students:

Yeah, I think the main challenges that has been a part of this UB program is the match partnerships. Not in a, and when I say partnerships I don’t mean necessarily its hard, people don’t want to work with students because they do. But it’s the institutional commitment that….. institutional financial commitment to either make this program an institutional responsibility place some type of allocation into the line or the budget for this program. We partnered with the Education Department, the IT department at the, with the College of Education at MU. They love our program and so anything technology, I-Pads, anything that
they are switching out we get. So, that’s been a really good relationship umm, that we built, with that program. And, so, be, being able to have people that see our needs, they saw our needs and they really stuck by our program which has been very effective.

**Off Campus Issues.** As the College Administrator finished up her interview and gauged what the institution could do to help the director and the program, she said that going forward her hope is that the institution could provide a building or space that would solely be UB. The program has had to move on several occasions due to school closings and simply losing space, which has made it difficult to recruit and keep students:

Well, I would love to see the institution take on the responsibility of locating a place so that regular UB programs locating in a few high schools down in the Detroit area, I would love to see the institution provide a stand-alone building, or a stand-alone space for our UB program. So that if there are problems within this public school system and schools are shut down as they have been before our staff does not have to move.

I think a couple of the, a couple of major challenges has been not being on the university’s campus. Which means that we are, we are out of sight and we are out of mind. So, people don’t see our day to day interactions with students at the university. They, they don’t see what goes on in the, in the, in the urban school district in terms of the politics of that, in terms of what actually happens in the building from day to day. So, while somebody on campus may want me to respond to an email right away, we may have a fire drill or there may be a fight or
I might have a parent that walks in that whose student just got put out of school or some major event that happened right in the building that the university doesn’t, they don’t know about nor…. not that they care about it, but they don’t, they don’t have to worry about it because it doesn’t impact their day to day.

During the director’s interview, I sensed frustration regarding the constant uncertainty of what the Department of Education will do from year to year regarding the program’s budget. Her frustration came across by her sighs and pauses, as if she was thinking about what she wanted to say and how she wanted to convey her message. Also, her voice rose whenever she was making a point, and she became more passionate throughout the interview. At one time, if a program received a Grant Award Notification (GAN), it would nearly guarantee the program’s money situation for the next four years. However, the GAN is merely a piece of paper to give one a starting point, but it doesn’t necessarily mean that this will be the reality for the program and its staff. The program has had to make a number of moves because of low performing or struggling schools closing in Detroit. This in turn leaves her scrambling to explain the situation to the Department of Education and requires a revision of the grant to detail their new school or facility. Her program stood out to me because she has been the only director of the program for an extended period of time. Therefore, she has witnessed the number of changes that programs such as hers have undergone, and could speak with authority about the evolution of the program from 1999 to the present day because of her experiences. She discussed that a major issue she has had is not having the program at the host site.

**Student Preparedness and College Tours.** The director discussed the issues that confront students and parents in their day-to-day lives living in the low-income
communities in Detroit and how they hamper her ability to concentrate on preparing students as well as parents for college. She admits it is hard to make students and parents buy into the American Dream of post-secondary education and access when they have to go home to face the stark reality of paying light bills and gas bills, not having enough food to provide for their families, and facing eviction because of failure to pay rent.

In her interview, Ms. James said that she believes the UB Program is needed because schools often fail to inform and push students about the importance of attending classes, taking college preparatory classes, and behaving in class. Also, she believes, as do many in the field of education, that teachers have a large responsibility in curriculum; however, they are forced to concentrate on teaching to state standardized tests because heavy emphasis is placed on using these tests to determine if students and schools are succeeding. Ms. James believes UB would be an appropriate model to help administrators and teachers reach their goals in educating students; in addition, by providing students with supplementary advising and college information, helping them develop their study skills, and keeping them abreast of their GPA and test scores, the UB program could become another stakeholder within the building. Ms. James prepares her students by providing timely and accurate information about the college process. She emphasized that her students and parents get information about how to deal with life, as well as getting a support network. She was quick to add that she is not a “co-signer,” meaning she isn’t there to tell them what they want to hear or to back up students when they are clearly in the wrong. The director believes that students gain more than study and testing skills and college information; they also learn how to advocate for themselves, and parents learn how to advocate for their students.
Student preparation also consists of college tours; many students in the three
groups were greatly impacted by these and the tours were vital in what college they
eventually chose to attend. Ms. James works with a tour company that is very familiar
with the colleges and universities that she selects for their tours. In the 15 years it has
been at MU, the program has been virtually 100% African American; therefore, the
students have the opportunity to visit many HBCUs on these tours. However, the director
provides a variety so that they have the opportunity to see the differences between PWIs,
HBCUs, Ivy League institutions, community colleges, and private schools. Their tour
driver is familiar with the area the schools are located in, and he is able to provide
background information on the institutions of higher education they visit that many
younger college tour guides might not know. The invaluable information that the students
receive goes beyond what majors a school may have and how large the institution is; they
also gain a history lesson and learn how they themselves, in a symbolic gesture, must
take the baton and take it a step further to advance their lives, neighborhoods,
communities, and the country. Ms. James commented on the importance of these college
tours for her past and current students:

So when we’re on those tours and we’re on that bus, we’re seeing colleges and
then we’re talking about history. We’re talking about the Civil Rights movement. We’re
talking about the fact that, you know, blacks couldn’t, you know, be educated. So we’re
talking about those things. So, the kids get the full perspective of why college is
important. So, when they come back and stuff starts happening in their lives, which we
know it will, they will have had an experience that can motivate them and say, “You
know what, yeah; this is really messed up in my life right now, but man this is not all that
there is.” Those college tours are phenomenal. They are worth every penny that our program spends.

The Vice President believes the director does a great job preparing students and parents for life after high school. She pointed out the leadership development opportunities that students receive by going to student conferences and taking part in a series of workshops. She explained that the college tours, ACT and SAT preparation, and financial aid workshops are tremendous opportunities and that the director is providing this information to students and parents. She believes that the two financial aid workshops for students and parents together, and the private session for parents, are a great experience for the families because parents can come back to the private session and address questions that may have developed out of the first meeting, or while they attempted to work on the packet alone:

The students get the opportunity to have resources such as ACT and SAT prep workshops. They get financial aid experience information. Their parents get the same type of information in private parent workshop as well. The students have the opportunity to travel to various colleges and universities to explore the different type of colleges and universities. Not only within the state of Michigan but without the, but with….out of the state of Michigan as well. So, it’s in the actual country a certain region, I know each year they attempt to take a college tour and explore the different types of universities from TWIs, Traditional White Institutions or Predominantly White Institutions to HBCUs or Hispanic Serving Institutions, community colleges, etc. So, they’re so many resources, they get
resources and information on public speaking. How to develop leadership skills, just a number of things.

I think that they get timely information. I think they get accurate information, about college, about the college processes, about…… Life! Really, they, they gain an ally in that building. They gain a support network. They don’t gain a co-signer. And a, what I mean by that is they don’t gain somebody that’s just going to tell them what they want to hear. You know, we give them just as much support for when they’re wrong, they’re wrong. And, so, we help them build the skills necessary to talk to teachers, to become a better student advocate.

**Themes and Sub Research Question One**

The discussion with the administrator and director helped me learn about the inner workings of managing a program that isn’t located on campus, which is unique among most UB programs. I found that both the administrator and the director were forthright in their description of their experiences with the program. The director was matter-of-fact when she discussed what needs to be done to realistically work with students to make a real impact in their lives and ensure that they truly are prepared academically and socially to make it in post-secondary education.

This study accomplished four main goals. First, it provided insight into the experiences of an UB director managing a program within the constant turmoil of changes at the target school she worked in: how she dealt with changes from the Department of Education; constant adjustments she needed to make as they related to the budget and staffing changes; and the non-academic external factors involving participants’ home life and circumstances. Second, through the stories from current high
school students, college students, and graduates, I could analyze how these groups viewed the director, her leadership skills, and what impact she made on their lives. Third, the study revealed how the institution assisted the director in meeting the objectives set forth by the Department of Education, and it also revealed that the institution still has some way to go in other areas to support the director of such a program in assisting as budgets continue to decrease across the board for these programs. Lastly, major themes came out of the interviews with the three different student groups and the administrator and director.

**Director and Administrator**

**Off Campus Issues.** A theme that emerged from the interviews was that of Off Campus Issues, and how to convey the challenges the project faces at the high school to the host institution. The director described how the college work schedule conflicts with the high school work schedule, and the realities of being a woman working in a rough area in Detroit, Michigan. She discussed that the times the college set aside for its employees to have off work isn’t feasible for her at her school. Going home at the end of the college workday would find her walking alone to her car because most of the high school students and staff had already gone home for the day. She believes she shouldn’t be placed in the position of deciding between safety and being compliant to the rules of a college that is two to three hours away. Other issues include needing material and resources, and conveying that to the institution. She explains that it is often difficult; they lack visibility on campus because they’re at the high school so they’re often forgotten about. The college administrator brought up this issue and stated she has tried to be cognizant of that reality for the director and tries her best to accommodate the director.
and the program. In her interview, the college administrator wanted to see more of a commitment from the university to assist the program, staff, and participants. In addition, she hoped the institution could provide a permanent facility for the program to eliminate the constant worry where the project will be from year to year.

This is an issue which came up in the interviews from both the college administrator and the director. I have seen similar cases, though not to this extent because the host institution was located in the same city as the programs I witnessed. However, MU is hours away from its target school and has a different set of problems and an entirely different environment; this isolation means that the institution doesn’t see, and often fails to understand, the realities facing the director and the participants. The findings of this study suggest that if key administrators visit the target school and spend a day there, they may come to a better understanding of what the director is facing and can make plans to coordinate something more feasible for the program.

**Creativity (Dealing with Budget and Financial Issues).** The college administrator and director both spoke at length about the decreasing resources while being mandated to serve more students; this has made providing great service to all of the participants a challenge. The director discussed that for most of her 15 years she hasn’t had much of a staff. She has hired mentors and tutors to assist students in their school work, but she hasn’t had a consistent full-time employee to work with her to implement the program at the high school. The financial issues have made it a challenge to hire tutors because it is difficult to hire someone willing to come in for a couple of hours in the middle of the day.
The college administrator discussed how creative the director had to become in establishing partnerships and other means of supplementing the budget for the program. A creative way Ms. James solved the issues of needing administrative help and additional tutors, but not spending the program’s budget on these services, was to successfully apply for a grant with Ameri-Corp. The financial strain meant they had to cut back on summer programming activities, such as the six week summer residential component which is now a three week summer residential component. She also had to cut the bridge program for graduating seniors to save money. The director still provides a simulated bridge program for students who completed their junior year in high school in order to provide them with some experience with living in a residence hall and attending class on a college campus. She has made sure to keep some semblance of the summer bridge program because she believes it is a pivotal piece to help with the growth of her students in the program.

**Themes and Sub Research Question two**

**Creativity (Supplement Budget Loss).** The college administrator and UB director talked about the importance of creativity in order for the director to be able to provide top notch services for student participants. In their interviews, the director and college administrator both discussed at length how the program has suffered a number of budget cuts from the Department of Education. This has created a sense of uncertainty within a number of UB programs’ staff concerning how they will cope with the new realities caused by budget cuts. The Midwestern University’s UB program had to deal with losing their facilities and high school as well, which has made the director’s job even more difficult. The director described the number of partnerships she has formed to
provide students with the latest in computers and technology. She has looked for other
grants to help subsidize the money she receives from the UB program’s grant. The
Ameri-Corp grant has helped provide extra money in order for her to have a staff member
on board who assists her in providing services for the participants.

The findings suggest that the director, despite the mounting pressures of providing
more services for more students with less money, has done an adequate job. The fact that
the program was renewed less than two years ago, while nearly 20% of Michigan
programs lost their projects during 2012, shows that the director has made adequate
progress meeting objectives set forth by the Department of Education. The constant
upheaval the program has endured has not dissipated support from parents nor students,
who continue to support and participate in the program. In addition, the host institution,
Midwestern University UB program, and the target schools have remained supportive of
the director and the program’s mission.

**Developing Partnerships.** The theme of Developing Partnerships was discussed
in the interviews with both the college administrator and the director. They both indicated
how vital these partnerships are as the program suffers budget cuts and faces an uncertain
future concerning the yearly budget. The partnerships that the director has formed have
essentially kept the program afloat, and have provided services and resources that
participants in the program sorely need. In the area of technology, having facilities and
receiving office help has taken some of the strain off of the director so she can continue
to give her students the assistance they need to make it through secondary school and
enroll and graduate from a post-secondary school. In their last grant competition, the
Department of Education stressed the importance of the UB programs throughout the
country to foster and develop partnerships throughout their community. While other programs are just now looking into developing partnerships, Midwestern University’s UB program has done this for many years, and the college administrator credits the program’s director for her creativity and vision in setting this up for the program.

The finding suggests that the development of partnerships has been effective because the program may have folded without them. When the director had to quickly locate another target school because her previous school closed, she used her community and partnership connections to secure a facility. The director located partners who would work with the program by providing students with the latest in technology and software. Developing strong partnerships is essential in order for the program to thrive and assist students with their needs.

Themes and Sub Research Question Three

High School Group

Help, Encouragement and Love. These major themes were a result of the high school group interviews and included participants feeling like they were in a family. The predominant demographic in UB is low-income and will generally see a higher rate of single mothers who are often away from the family in order to provide for the home. The problems that can occur with teenagers who may lack parental guidance can lead to students feeling alone and unloved, having low self-esteem, and lacking directions. In addition, students who come from this background often come from families where academics aren’t highly coveted and survival is more important. The director mentioned that her students often face the stress of economically needing to help their families pay bills in order to make it month to month. The high school students in this study indicated
that the director helped keep them on the right track to graduate from high school, not lose sight of enrolling into college, and stay out of trouble. If they did find trouble, students indicated the director showed them tough love, helped devise a plan to get them back on track, and encouraged them to continue pursuing their goals.

**College Tours and Field Trips.** This was another theme that came out of the high school group. When students in this group were interviewed individually, they each spoke about the importance of this activity during both the school year and summer, and that it gave them the opportunity to see something positive. Two of three students indicated that these trips were the first time they had traveled outside of Detroit. A 17- or 18-year-old student who has the chance to travel and see different types of institution can find it life altering when finally standing on a college campus. The feeling many of these students have is that they belong, and this builds confidence that college isn’t a goal that is unreachable for them. A few students mentioned that these trips were mandatory, and it sometimes became an issue trying to navigate mandatory UB activities with home obligations and other work or school activities. However, the study’s findings suggest that students believed the exposure and tours helped them when they enrolled into college and the program prepared them by integrating them academically and socially to the institution.

**Talk/Approachable Director.** This was another major theme from the interviews with this group. One student made a major life move from New York City to Detroit, another student had a baby at the end of her junior year, and a third had to learn how to navigate through the college process. These major life obstacles, which would greatly impact anyone at any age, became more of an obstacle for students who were from a low-
income background. Each student indicated that Ms. James was not only approachable, but would also go out of her way to seek them out and talk to them about what was going on in their lives. The director showed students that she was willing to speak to them without being prompted by the student to do so, and this left an indelible mark on them. The fact that all three of the females are African American, as is the director, may have made the director more approachable because the students saw someone they could relate to. Many of the students in the study indicated that they viewed Ms. James as a role model. Having such a model to follow for four years helped these students form their perceptions about their academic identities. The findings from the interviews suggest that students knowing they have someone such as the director to speak to about personal problems occurring at home or in their lives, as well as to speak to about school related issues, without being judged or looked down upon, went a long way toward students succeeding and remaining dedicated to the program.

**Summary for High School Themes.** The findings suggest that the themes that emerged from this group, such as Family, College Tours and Field Trips, and Talk/Approachable Director, may have emerged because the students were in the midst of these activities as current UB students. Family, which was a prominent theme that crossed all groups, was prominent in this group because of the life changing events that took place, from a student having a baby to another making a major move from New York to Michigan. These major life changes stood out because the director was pivotal in helping and supporting the students through these difficult stages in their lives, and reminded them that a college degree is important. In the interviews, students indicated that they were soon heading off to a college tour or had just been on a tour. Therefore,
these events were fresh in their mind and made more of an impact. Each student indicated that they’re currently deciding on the institution of higher education they plan to attend. Therefore, this major life decision and other activities keep them constantly speaking to the director of the program. Unlike the other groups, they don’t have the benefit of time.

**Current College Student Group**

*ACT and College Preparedness.* One of the themes that emerged from this group was ACT and College Preparedness and how pivotal this was in being accepted to their college of choice. This aspect of the program was mentioned by one of the high school graduate students as one of the primary reasons for joining the program. The importance of taking rigorous high school courses is vital in order for students to be prepared to take the ACT. The adoption of the Common Core State Standards has made the Department of Education ensure that their objectives are aligned with college and career readiness.

The two college students discussed how the director constantly emphasized the importance of receiving high scores on the ACT that in turn could give them more choices in what institution they could attend. Students discussed that during the tutorials, which were during the school year and during the summer program, they practiced strategies in preparing for the ACT. They practiced a host of math and reading problems that appeared on example ACT questions. Also, students worked with their mentors in the evening during the summer to help prepare for the test. All of the students appreciated the work of the staff and the emphasis that the director placed on being prepared for the ACT. When they began the college application process, they soon learned how vital high scores were when applying to colleges of their choice. All of the students in this group were accepted into the college of their choice and they credited their scores on the ACT
in helping them enroll into the institution of their choosing. The findings suggest the
students in the program benefitted from the ACT preparation. The program has had at
least 90% of its seniors go on to enroll into college. The target high school said that in
2011, 56% of its students were accepted into at least a community college and 35% of the
students in the district went on to college (Watkins, 2012).

**College Tours and Field Trips.** Another theme that emerged from this group was
the opportunity to travel. This is generally one of the major draws for parents and
students to the program. The opportunity for students to travel to major cities around the
country and learn about the culture and history in the city, as well as learn about the post-
secondary institutions in the surrounding areas, lets students see a variety of institutions
that serve different needs for students. The trips for are life changing for many
participants in the program because they are out of their city and neighborhood for the
first time. Parents and students are often nervous on their first excursion, but as time goes
on they enjoy the opportunity to travel and come back home to tell their family and peers
about what they saw and learned on their trip. These trips have a way of making the
world become smaller and not so large and scary to young people who only knew the
little small corner they belong to.

The college tours are part of a number of field trips, and sometimes, such as with
the Midwestern University UB Program, they are solely the whole trip. The trips were
educational not only because they showed the students a number of colleges and
universities around the country, but also because those trips taught them life lessons and
historical lessons about the country, the area they’re in, and the institution itself. The
director detailed how the college tours are set up and how vital and lives changing these
tours are for a student.

One student in the group decided to attend a HBCU as a result of taking part in
the tours. She credits the trips and all she learned on them with giving her the confidence
to travel hundreds of miles away from home to receive her education. Another student
decided to remain at MU because of all the time spent on campus during the summer
program. This program helped her gain confidence on a college campus, and the time
spent sitting in class with professors at the college and the familiarity of the campus
setting made the institution become home for her. The findings suggest that the college
tours the director planned for the students had a great impact on students from all groups.
Nearly all current and former students credited the college tours with helping them decide
what institution they would attend.

**Life Lessons.** The final theme that emerged from this group concerns life lessons
outside of UB. The time spent in the UB program and around staff led to discussions
concerning issues taking place in a student’s home and among their peers. Although UB
is an academic program geared towards helping and motivating students to enroll and
graduate from a 4 year college or university, the other aspects of the program lead to the
director being considered a counselor/confidante to the participants in the program. The
participants in the program are over two-thirds low-income, nearly 100% African
American, and over 70% female, and they have a number of obstacles that will come at
them from their background. The findings suggest that these life lessons are just as
important to the development of the students and their success in college as are the
academic aspects of the program that the director provided to her students. In all of the
students groups, current and former students stressed the significance of giving back and helping others. This is seen when the high school students discussed their volunteer projects, the college students discussed what they want to do in their career (which is help students similar to them), and the graduate students discussed currently working with UB or similar programs to reach back and help students who were similar to them at that age.

**Summary for College Themes.** The finding suggests that the themes that emerged from this group, such as ACT and College Preparedness, College Tours and Field Trips, and Life Lessons, were so pronounced because the students are recent UB and high school graduates. The students in the group took the ACT in the last year or two, and the students indicated that college tours were important in leading them to the school they were currently attending. The life lessons outside of the UB program most likely stand out because the students have the benefit of time and distance from the program. Now that they are in college and going through the process that they have been preparing for during the past four years, they have come to understand why Ms. James did the activities and spoke the way she did. As college students, they understand the importance of being on time and working hard.

**Graduate Group**

**Family.** Family was a major theme among the graduate student group. This group had the benefit of time to reflect back to their days in the program under this director. Whereas the other two groups were still in the process of or had recently graduated from the program, this group had left the program, in some cases a decade ago. The fact that the members of this group have been gone from this program for so long but choose to stay in contact with their director, and in some cases work with the younger students in
the very project that helped them, illustrates how close-knit the program participants were
with the director and each other.

Each student discussed how pivotal the program was in their development
academically and socially. GSA spoke about how he was basically a foreigner when he
returned back to the United States as an 8th grader. He had to learn the language, the
culture, and the people. He pointed out that the program helped him immensely during
this process, making him confident interacting with others. Graduate Student C came
from a family that made her feel she would never be successful, which in turn made her
lack self-esteem and confidence. The director was the one constant in her life,
continuously telling her that she could make it if only she believed in herself and hard
work. The director constantly spoke to this young woman, providing positive
reinforcement, building up her self-esteem, and giving her the confidence to stand up to
the negativity hitting her at home and in her environment every day. Graduate Student B
spoke of how the director was like a second mother to her and constantly stayed on her
about grades and class work. The director’s constant presence in school didn’t allow him
an opportunity to slack off from his responsibilities. He intimated throughout his
interview that without her presence, he didn’t know where he would be today.

The director providing the family structure within her program positively
impacted the students interviewed in the study. The director made each student reach
down to work harder. She made them believe they were just as capable as any student
who thought about enrolling into a college/university. The belief that she instilled in this
group has translated to these students wanting to help other students who came from their
background. The members of this group all mentioned that because of the director’s
influence in their lives, they all have gone on to become mentors to young high school students. One member of the group has gone on to graduate school to continue work similar to what she witnessed her director do in the field of education. Two members of the group have come back to the Midwestern University UB program to help their former director with students currently in the project. Seeing previous students giving back to the program in this manner helps current students appreciate the concept of being a family and helping one another out.

The finding suggests that this theme crossed each UB student group who interviewed in this study. It is seen in each interview that the trips influenced them on their college choice. Students in the Midwestern University’s UB program are generally choosing to attend the institution they spend three weeks per summer at throughout their time in the project, or colleges and universities the director took them to visit. These trips have had the impact on students that the UB program was designed for, which is to provide students the opportunity to become the first in their family to matriculate through higher education and obtain the qualifications necessary for often higher paying jobs that improve their lives, those of future generations in their family, and their communities.

**Giving Back to Younger Students and Role Model.** The themes of the older students and graduates Giving Back to Younger Students and Role Model emerged from this group. This theme was unique from the other two groups. The age of this group was most likely the biggest reason why this became important. The other two groups were a lot younger. One group was still high school age students and the other group was only one or two years removed from the program. The older group truly sees the benefits of the program and how essential it is for them to come back and help out.
All three discussed how the director stressed helping one another while they were participants in the program. Graduate Student A discussed how he was put off at first about the idea of helping others. His thought process was if he can struggle through and get his work done then everyone should be able to do the same. However, he said the director talked to him about how some students will struggle with work that he found easier. Since he was able to do the work, he should help the other participants because in the end, it will help the whole group finish the assignment sooner and therefore have more free time. Now GSA is working with students in his own tutorial program and is providing them with the same lessons he learned in the UB program. Both GSB and GSC have come back to work with Midwestern University’s UB program. They both stated in the interviews that they want to help students similar to them and show them through their experiences how they can be successful and accomplish their goals. The interview findings suggest that the director successfully encouraged program participants to help younger students reach their goal of graduating from college. All three said they viewed Ms. James as a role model in how they should carry themselves in helping students. All three of these students have worked with the Upward Bound program or similar programs in order to give back and help students reach the goal of being the first in their families to graduate from a university. As the three students thought about giving back to younger students, they also imparted life lessons they learned as participants in the program.

*Life Lessons.* This major theme came up multiple times within this group. It ranged from students learning about the importance of time management to being responsible for one’s actions and not making excuses. GSA spoke about how the director stressed being punctual to the students. It may seem like something minor; however, it is
a problem with a lot of students in the program. He discussed how the director spoke about respecting other people’s time. The other graduates spoke about responsibility, developing study skills, and knowing how to prepare for a test.

The findings in this area suggest that the director did more than just provide information to go to college. The director helped influence the students in how to be respected members in their community. The director was an example each day in how they should carry themselves and be accountable for their actions. In addition, the director exposed students to the idea that their word is their bond. Others will hold them to what they say. Therefore, it is up to the students to keep their word or promises.

**College Tours and Field Trips.** The College tours and field trips theme was discussed as vital for students who, in most cases, would have never received this exposure if not for the Upward Bound program. The college administrator and director spoke of the importance this activity has for the participants. The fact that students can step on a college campus and repeat this process over and over again throughout their participation in the program is life changing. This activity first exposes students to a variety of colleges available to fit their particular needs. Furthermore, this activity gives the students the confidence that they can succeed in this endeavor if they are willing to work because the college representatives and officials they meet on these tours drill home the message that they can succeed. The unique part of MU’s college tours is that the students not only receive information and visit colleges, but they’re also given a history and cultural lesson about the university, the city, and its people. The person who drives the students to these colleges provides a unique historical prospective about each college or university the students see and relates it back to the students and their lives.
The finding suggests that this theme crossed three of the four groups interviewed in this study. It is seen in each interview from those three groups that the students, college administrator, and director provided that the trip influenced the students on their college choice. Students in the Midwestern University’s UB program are generally choosing to attend the institution they spend three weeks per summer at throughout their time in the project, or colleges and universities the director took them to visit throughout the year. These trips have had the impact which the UB program was designed to do, which is to provide students the opportunity to become the first in their family to matriculate through higher education and to obtain the qualifications necessary for often higher paying jobs to improve their lives, those of future generations in their family, and their communities.

Summary of Themes

The 21 themes that emerged from the four groups as illustrated in Table 4 in this study helped explained the story of what was seen as important within each group. Some of the themes that emerged within the groups crossed over other groups, such as College Tours and Field Trips, Role Models and Life Lessons. Other themes were unique within a respective group such as Encouragement and Love in the high school group, program and opportunities in the college group and giving back to younger students in the graduate group. The themes within the groups also helped distinguished each group and highlight what they needed or sought and where they were in their lives when it came to the program and director.

Conclusion

Although the UB main objective is to see that its participants graduate from a four-year university, the interviews with different student groups illustrate that a director
in tune with the needs of the students in the program provides so much more. A director can be the example to students who may lack one among their family and friends. The director in the MU program provides support, care, and encouragement to the project’s participants, which they may lack in their home environment. This aspect of the program provided by the director may not show up in the numbers that the programs are ultimately judged by, such as in high school completion and college graduation rates for students; however, it can play a key role in ensuring students reach those objectives.

This knowledge makes it all the more paramount that directors foster an environment of support, care, and accountability when working with participants in the program. Former UB participants detailed in their interviews the positive and long-term effects of participating in the MU’s program under Ms. James and how they became more determined to help young students going through similar circumstances. The increasing enrollment of low-income and first-generation students into colleges/universities around the country, many of whom will be underprepared if current trends continue, necessitates a special focus on practices by directors such as in this study in how they assist this population of students beyond academics. The findings of this study support the need for future research on the impact of directors in programs that target low-income and other underrepresented students.
Chapter Five

Discussion, Recommendations, and Conclusions

This chapter presents an overview of the study and the major findings; the limitations of the study; and implications for policy, practice, and theory. The chapter also includes recommendations for future research.

Overview of the Study

This study was a single case study that examined Midwestern University’s UB program. The case study used data gathered from interviews with a director, former students, current students, college administrator, program documents, and records. I analyzed and triangulated the data; this research methodology produced six major themes that will be discussed in this chapter. Although findings from this single institutional case study are not generalizable, I recommend UB programs use six major themes operate in the present difficult economic and unstable political climate.

This study presents findings and recommendations, through student and former-student perceptions and those of the administrator, how a director impacts low-income and first-generation students to complete and graduate from the program. In the past, scholarly research on UB program was mainly student focused, indicating how the program as a whole impacted student efficacy, student grades, attendance, family involvement in students’ education, minority students, students enrolling in college, and graduating. However, the literature lacked data on how a director’s leadership impacts students to persist and graduate.

The research methodology in the current case study included a collection of respondent data from researcher-conducted interviews that took place in person or by
telephone at one UB program in Michigan. I invited current and former students to participate in an interview to discuss their perceptions about the director of the UB program, the activities the director instigated for participants and the impact the director had on students. The college administrator and director discussed their perception of the program, policies, budget, and services designed to increase completion and graduation rates of participants in the program.

**Discussion of the Findings**

The eight students in the program shared perceptions about their time and interaction with the director of the project. I obtained the data for this study through individual interviews with eight current and former student participants, and two individual interviews with the director and a college administrator. In addition to the interviews, I made field notes of my observations during each interview. Data such as grants, annual reports, and articles assisted in my study to gain insight about the director’s performance in running this project. From the four groups interviewed about their perceptions of the director of the UB program at MU, 21 themes emerged. This section continues with a discussion of the 21 themes that students and administrators indicated made a significant impact on current and former students.

In this case study I found six important themes from the interviews conducted in early 2014 that were vital for a director to run a successful program: help/opportunities, family, role model, college tours and field trips, ACT and college preparedness, and life lessons. As shown on tables in Chapter 4, of the 21 themes that emerged from the study, these six were most prevalent among all groups that participated in the study, indicating the necessary factors the director provided to students through the program. Five of the
themes overlapped between groups: role model, help/opportunities, college tours and field trips, ACT and college preparedness, and life lessons; these were important to the success of the director to effectively run this program, and supported by the literature review for this study. One theme that was unique to this study was family. Researchers illustrated how family could negatively or positively impact student success in postsecondary education, but in this study students who may have had support or no support from their families at home gradually came to view the director and the program as their family.

**Role Model**

One major element students in this UB program mentioned was the role-model theme. This theme crossed all student groups and was found to be significant among current and former students. Current and former students discussed at length that they saw no one in their families or neighborhoods who had successfully completed college. Students in the program talked about modeling on the director’s approach. A couple of students began tutoring other students because of the director’s influence. One high school student stated, “I look up to her, Mrs. James. You know, I look up to her as a mentor.” Others became education majors in hopes that they too could perform work similar to that of the director. A current college student stated,

> She is a great leader. I really admire her. I aspired to be just like her. So, I’m getting a degree in early childhood development, but I want to get my Master’s in Higher Education Administration so I can follow her footprint.

It was clear from the data gained in this case study that students identified with this director because the director had experienced similar challenges growing up, which led to
having effective skills appropriate to the MU’s program. In reviewing previous studies about the theme of role models and how they impact students; in particular, being students of color played a role in developing students’ academic identities. Zirkel (2002) suggested that students who reported having a race and gender matching that of their role model improved in academics a year after their initial contact. The findings in Zirkel’s study also suggested that students whose race and gender matched that of their role model thought more about their future and focused more on adults rather than peers as idols (Zirkel, 2002).

**Life Lessons**

The theme of life lessons crossed the two older groups of former UB students. The data gained in this case study clearly showed that students believed the lessons the director imparted to them made a profound impact on the type of students they became in college. The college and graduate students all indicated lessons, such as respecting others’ time, helping others, and accomplishing worthy goals, takes hard work, which is essential to achieve success in college. Most students indicated in their interviews they did not receive these types of lessons at home and it was only through the UB program and being exposed to the director, who consistently drilled these messages into them, that they learned about the importance of time management, setting goals, and caring about others. A former student stated,

She was always in tune. Like, when I tell you like outside of the tutoring, outside of the academics, outside of all of that, when I tell you Ms. James was like absolutely amazing, like with personal life and, you know, assisting me like, you
know. I remember one Thanksgiving she came to my house and brought like a Thanksgiving basket.

A review of the literature showed that the importance of a leader to influence individuals to either go along with an idea or support a cause is the essence of political skill (Ferris et al., 2005; Graham, 1997). Students received life lessons in an effort to prepare them to succeed at a college or university.

**ACT, College Preparedness, and College Field Trip**

The themes of ACT, college preparedness, and college tours and field trips were significant among some groups indicating why they were interested and joined the program. The findings supported the literature and illustrated that students’ interest in the program directly related to doing well on the ACT, being prepared to succeed in college, and having the opportunity to travel. A former student stated, “I knew nothing about college while I was in high school until I was in Upward Bound. Just trying to access to the ACT prep and tutoring and mentoring.” The students all spoke at length about the importance of tutorials, summer programming, college tours and field trips in developing them to become stronger students and helping them decide which college institution they would attend. A student explained,

I came here to prep for the ACTs, came here to get mentored by some of the people that already went through college and things like that just to take whatever knowledge they had of college and get as much advice as I could get. So, in regards to helping me succeed.
The literature showed that one of the UB program objectives is to expose and familiarize low-income and first-generation students with college-level coursework (Garcia & Paz, 2009). The goal of the program is to instill the importance of matriculation by providing students with the necessary tools to be successful academically and socially (Garcia & Paz). Lauridsen (1982) found for participants who participated in the UB summer bridge program that they were more persistent and minority participants in the program outperformed non-bridge students in mathematics and science by a grade point (Simpson, Hynd, Nist, & Burrell, 1997). In addition, the summer bridge program offers the opportunity for the director to bring together peers who are going through similar adjustments and come from the same socioeconomic or family educational background (Garcia & Paz, 2009).

When I interviewed current and former UB students in this program, they all spoke about the importance of the college tours and field trips during the school year and summer program, explaining that it gave them the opportunity to be a part of something positive. The opportunity for high school-age students to travel and see different institutions was life altering. This was, for most UB participants, the first chance to stand and walk on a college campus. The feeling many students received was one of belonging and that college is not an insurmountable dream. A few students mentioned these trips were mandatory and they worked to balance mandatory activities of UB with home obligations and other work or school activities. Graham (1997) spoke of the lack of flexibility in summer and other UB program activities. However, these requirements provided students with structure, which most had not experienced at home, and to keep them busy because participants in the UB program were still minors (Graham, 1997).
However, the study revealed that students believed these requirements helped them when they enrolled in college because the program prepared them by helping them integrate academically and socially to the institution (Graham, 1997).

**Help/Opportunities**

One major elements students in this UB program mentioned was the help-opportunities theme. This theme arose as some students discussed their belief that without the assistance of the director and program, they would not be college graduates today. One student expressed feelings for the director, indicating the director was always there for the student:

I love Mrs. James because you know she is a real, she is a real person. You know, she, she helps … she … she’s like a counselor to me. I can come talk to her about anything and she … she just awesome, like I love her to death.

Another student discussed the loss of the student’s mother and how the director was able to help the student stay on track to graduate from high school and enroll in college.

I was really having a hard time with that and even when my mom passed away, you know, she was always there. Like, even when I graduated from high school, she always made sure that she could stay in contact with me.

The student finished by saying the director was, “Definitely family.” This finding supports the literature that the UB program can provide support for low-income and first-generation students. A director can set the tone at the start of the program to provide assistance to students and families. However, as Director James averred, once students
graduated from high school and received the tools offered by UB, they could be self-
sufficient at a college or university.

The UB program offered help/opportunities by teaching students about financial
aid. The director discussed with parents and students the difference between scholarships,
grants, and loans. The program helped students learn how to complete college
applications and the importance of meeting deadlines. This theme is one of the critical
elements in the present case study for a successful program. Students who have one of the
following characteristics—being low income, minority, or first-generation—are likely to
lack specific types of “college knowledge” such as how to apply for financial aid,
complete college applications, and take college preparatory courses (Vargas, 2004). The
director of this UB program helped students and families make the connection between
career goals and educational requirements and learn how to properly finance education
without going deeply into debt. The director illustrates this care and concern for student
and parents by repeating the presentations several times to ensure all students and parents
receive the information when schedules conflict, due to work, activities, and family
responsibilities.

Family

A major element students in this UB program mentioned was the family theme.
All groups touched on the theme of family. This finding is unique when viewing the
literature because it is not addressed in any studies. The director providing a family
atmosphere can be pivotal in whether a student remains in the program, stays dedicated to
the objectives of the program (graduating from a college or university), and the overall
success of the program in keeping the stated number of students each year, required by
the Department of Education. If the director loses a high percentage of students consistently, this could show the department that the program is not effective in retaining students, which could result into losing the program entirely.

Students talked described that they often did not receive support in their families and community, but did receive support from the director and the program. The MU UB program acted as a support system for participants who may lack direction and family and community support in their academic endeavors. One student encapsulated this sentiment saying,

I would say that the Midwestern University’s UB program because of [Mrs. James] it’s a program that’s just one of a kind. You know, definitely one of a kind. The interaction, the close knit, you know, family that she built under her leadership. It’s just, it’s just amazing.

The added stress of needing to help support their families as they reached 16 years of age and were eligible to work made the early years of developing a sense of family with the program essential to keep students attending the program. Benders’s (2009) study found that students who are from low-SES families needed jobs to help contribute to their families. This need created situations when financial survival was paramount for students to stay in their homes from month to month, which in turn made academics secondary in their lives and the goal of college becoming more distant or unattainable (Benders, 2009). The students in this study indicated the director helped to keep them on the right track, to graduate from high school, not to lose sight of enrolling into college, and kept them out of trouble. Student groups all indicated they felt good because it
seemed that someone truly cared for their well-being and kept them focused on going to college, whereas others lost sight of that goal.

**Conclusion on the Major Themes**

The data gained in this case study showed that the six major themes are important and critical elements for a director to create a successful UB project. For an UB program to survive, these elements must be included, along with a director who will be sure to implement strategies, activities, and workshops that will touch on all six elements. The director, as in this case study, needed commitment from the host institution (Midwestern University), two high schools, parents, and students for participants to develop academically and socially and prepare to enroll in college. In addition, the findings suggested that the academic component, on which much of the literature focused, is important; however, the social component the director provided in this case study was equally pivotal to student development and success. All three student groups discussed the impact and help the director provided outside of the academic component of the program that helped them grow into well-rounded adults and successful students. Based on the findings of this study, administrators and directors should consider the impact of academics as well as developing students socially. Programs and institutions should take note, when hiring a program director, of the importance of this individual’s ability to relate to the student population by sharing their own stories of being a low-income or first-generation student. Students cited that connecting with a director helped them succeed academically and socially; thus, hiring a director who comes from a similar background as the students becomes increasingly important in the ability to help students
persist through the program, graduate from secondary school, enroll in postsecondary school, and graduate from the institution.

**Research Contribution and Implication**

Lewin’s authoritarian-leadership model, put forth in this research, contributes in four ways to the research community. First, it frames the use of leadership in the theoretical lens of UB. Authoritarian leadership, also known as autocratic leadership, provides clear expectations for what needs to be done, when it should be done, and how it should be done. This leadership style worked effectively in Midwestern University’s UB program because the director acted as the staff, with the exception of recently hiring a part-time staff person through the Amer-I-Can grant. The director of the program had total autonomy to plan and execute plans for the UB program. Although the director perceived the challenge that the program was not on campus and hundreds of miles away, it also afforded the director the ability to make decisions for the program, scheduling when workshops, tutorials, meetings, college tours, and other activities could be held. Other UB programs that are located on the host campus have directors who must consult with staff and members of the institution about each decision, to reach agreement. What can be learned from this type of leadership in a UB program, besides the obvious factor that not having staff was a cost savings for the program, was that it saved time that could have been spent meeting with several entities, whereas other programs may require a series of meetings to reach consensus among staff and stakeholders at the host institution to implement services and provide resources to the participants in the project. In the case study, the director had the autonomy to make decisions and implement them for participants.
The research on UB programs and similar programs only examine the impact of the program and activities on the students. Little research was conducted about how the director and the director’s leadership style can impact the program and students. This study is important because it adds to the body of literature examining the perception of those involved in a UB program and how the director can impact the project, students, institution, and high schools in which they work. The program is unique from other programs because only one project director worked in the program throughout its entire existence. The MU program was unique: because of budgetary constraints, the director was the only permanent full-time staff member in the project. The project was not located on campus, which gave the director more autonomy to make decisions for the program. This case study can prove to be vital because, as budgetary constraints become a greater issue, the program composition (one full staff member and occasional part-time help) may be a format other program will need to use to remain afloat.

The data gained in this case study showed that students responded when the director took an interest in their lives outside the classroom. The director indicated that many of the problems students have in school can be attributed to issues at home. Students view their parents, siblings, and others in their home environment, “to be most significant and they are capable of promoting or diminishing him in self-worth and academic performance” (Ekanem, 2004; Ogbemudia & Aiasa, 2013, p. 120). The parents or guardians must take responsibility for the environment provided to their child and must create an atmosphere that will facilitate effective learning. Parents who fail can negatively influence their child’s learning (Ekanem, 2004; Ogbemudia & Aiasa, 2013). Additional research will assist in guiding policy and practice at a time when student-
success initiatives have been tied to accountability and funding by the Department of Education.

Participants in the study discussed the impact of the director on the program and the students rather than how the program as a whole impacted the students. Such an approach can be used to assess other UB programs to assess if the model used in this program will work in other programs that have more traditional staff in place. UB programs, as well as other TRIO projects, can use these results not only to compare their current operations and how the director of a particular program maneuvers through declining budgets, institutional, and high school policies, but also keeps participants engaged and performing well to meet objectives put forth by the Department of Education.

**Practical Implication**

The results of the current study are relevant to practitioners. First, other programs that were set up in a similar fashion can use Lewin’s authoritarian-leadership model. This study, by listening to the voices of people with a number of different perceptions, may enable other programs to compare themselves to the composition of staff, the size, and the location of the UM program. The comparison may be helpful in increasing the success of other UB programs.

**Stakeholders**

**University Administrator.** Colleges and university that host UB programs can use the leadership model or may become potential hosts at their institutions to critically consider issues that arose in the present study, enabling them to either avoid them or find different strategies to improve similar circumstances. Based on analysis from host
institutions, they could target specific practices to obtain the prescribed degree of effectiveness in the UB program. This approach may allow UB programs to spend funding in a more fruitful way, making their programs more effective.

**Program Directors.** Directors of UB programs and similar outreach programs can examine best practices from this case study to become more effective and buoy the success of their students. Student groups pointed out that the director took an interest in them as a person and did not looked at them only based on whether they met benchmarks of the Department of Education. Even in the college tours, students not only received information about the tours, but learned history and culture on these college tours, discerning how they fit into the story as they continue on the path that those who came before them. The tours were not simply dry facts about the college population size, fraternities and sororities, sports teams, and majors available on campus; rather, students learned about responsibility to not only themselves, but to their families, communities, and their program, and the need to work hard and succeed. The director in this study discussed the importance of flexibility for parent and students. The director scheduled morning and evening meetings to accommodate parents’ work schedules, childcare needs, and transportation issues. Parents and students discerned that the director was available to them. Parents and students felt they were important and that the director empathized with their plight. They, in turn, repaid the director by remaining with the program, despite a number of building moves and staff turnover.

**High School Target Schools.** This case study detailed the importance of a good working relationship to keep a program effective. Target schools interested in having such a program must be vested in the success in these programs. Target schools can assist
in this success by providing adequate facilities, at least the life of the grant. In this case study I listened to the struggle from this director to effectively run a program for students when so much uncertainty ensued about where they would be located. In addition, target schools can assist such programs in their school by helping promote them at such events as open house, freshmen orientation, and parent–teacher conferences. Last, host schools can provide resources, which the director in this case study indicated was a vital component to maintain students’ interest in the program. The convenience of having this equipment, such that students could stop by the UB office at any time to complete paperwork for class, complete applications for colleges and scholarships, and send out e-mails was essential, especially for participants who may not have had access to computers at home.

**Department of Education.** The Department of Education has an enormous responsibility to allocate nearly $1 billion for the sole purpose of educating and promoting the necessity of higher education to parents and students. However, over time, they asked directors and programs to do more with fewer resources. Diminishing funds has put strains on many staffs and programs to accomplish the goal. Program administrators fear that many good professionals who once chose to go into this area to help parents and students reach the dream of higher education are going into other fields. Long-time employees are moving to other positions that seem less tenuous. At the time I conducted the interview with the director, I did not know the director was planning to step down at the end of the school year. I was unsure if the decision was personal or could be ascribed to the constant battle of keeping the program afloat, causing burnout. However, the Department of Education cannot afford to lose valuable and passionate
program directors because of the stress of where the program will be from year to year. The Department of Education, when issuing prior-experience points that help an established program renew in the next grant cycle, should consider awarding points to programs that can effectively locate partners and find grants to help supplement the program. Seeking grants has become a major component of the program and many programs could not survive without the concerted efforts by directors to locate outside funding and resources for students. The Department of Education does mention the importance of partnerships in the grant process, but should officially recognize them in prior-experience points.

**Implication of Authoritarian Leadership**

The autocratic/authoritarian-leadership model is the classical approach to manage staff and departments. However, in this study, the director’s program model may be perceived as autocratic leadership because the director made the decisions and assigned work methods and processes. However, throughout most of Director James’s tenure as director, the director was the only employee of the program, with the exception of tutor/instructor staff who worked with students for a few hours per week or part-time help. The budget decreases and constant uncertainties of the program’s future make hiring permanent staff a difficult task, if not altogether impossible. This leadership style was effective in the framework of one person being a full-time employee. How effective this leadership style would be in a program that has several full-time employees is difficult to assess without conducting a similar case study. Lewin believed the democratic-leadership style was more effective in a group setting. However, Lewin’s
study found children in a group were less productive than members of an autocratic group (Liden & Antonakis, 2009).

However, the autocratic-leadership model was useful for the program in this study because the director was the final authority in making decisions for the program and participants. The detailed orders the director provided for staff (if there was one at the time) and participants, along with instructions made the director effective. The college administrator and students groups indicated that the director was well organized and made clear what was expected from them. The director indicted the no-nonsense style may have been off putting in the beginning, when results were foremost, and realized not all people responded well to a direct and highly demanding leadership style. The findings from this study suggest that the impact of the director’s leadership style played a pivotal role in students and parents remaining dedicated to the program and mission, creating the family atmosphere that all student groups mentioned, preparing participants to be successful in pursuing postsecondary education.

Limitations of the Study

As with all studies, this study was subject to limitations that could influence conclusions drawn from the dataset. McLeod (2001) stated, the “the primary aim of qualitative research is to develop an understanding of how the world is constructed” (p. 2). The sample size in this study was small. This case study was restricted to one UB program. Therefore, the results may not be a generalized representation of other populations or programs. However, Kuzel’s (1992) recommendation of six to eight interviews was a sufficient number in a qualitative study for a homogenous sample.
In addition, the convenience sampling used in this study caused some potential flaws: volunteers may not have been representative of the larger overall population and volunteers may be more willing if more of them work in the program (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). The primary purpose of this research was to better understand relationships that may exist, which in this case was a director’s and students’ perceptions of the impact of the director’s management of the program and whether the director benefitted the students and program (McMillan, 1996). Therefore, the results from this study will not be a generalized representation of other populations or programs.

Another limitation is the type of participants who responded to e-mails and wanted to take part in this study. These current and former students of the program were likely to be students who were doing well or had done well in their education and were, thus, more willing to take part in such a study. Students who may have struggled or did not reach the objectives set forth by the program would be more likely to ignore e-mails and requests to take part in such a study. As a result, readers should use caution when drawing conclusions from the results of this paper. Limitations to e-mail contact can derive from potential participants not reading the invitations, changing or losing their e-mail addresses (i.e., students who graduated from school), or people who have changed Internet providers (Meho, 2006; Meho & Tiboo, 2003).

**Recommendation for Additional Research**

Additional research with a larger population and sample size may result in meaningful quantitative conclusions about the perceptions of directors, students, and college administrators in analyzing how much impact a project director can have. Also, additional research could discern the strategies directors used to implement programs.
creatively enough to maneuver their program through myriad of changes. In addition, using more qualitative research will bring a voice to practices that directors in these programs or similar projects have established.

I recommend that participants who come from a variety of different settings (rural and urban, large city vs. small city) provide more stories about their programs. A national study could be conducted that collects quantitative and qualitative data from a wider sample of UB programs and other TRIO programs. A larger sample of host institutions will allow future researchers to identify additional program characteristics, participants, and project directors and staff that are statistically significant predictors of completion of the program and postsecondary graduation rates within six years.

In addition to using reflective practice, case studies or focus groups should include successful directors to ensure future researchers better understand which approaches work within the framework of UB or similar programs. The Department of Education strongly advocated programs and directors talk and share their stories in an effort to inform key policymakers about the effort put forth by UB programs to educate low-income and first-generation students in the United States. Directors and participants sharing their stories enables future researchers to gain more useful information about practices from directors who have experienced success in their projects.

Conducting additional qualitative case studies or survey research would enable researchers to collect the following data about directors in UB and similar programs: (a) additional data that describes strategies and practices implemented by directors in helping students complete secondary education, (b) program graduates enrolling and graduating from a 4-year postsecondary education, (c) developing partnerships with local
communities and collaborating with other programs in the area, (d) implementing diversity programs and workshops in the program, and (e) developing mentor–mentee programs to further support students in reaching the objectives of the program.

**Conclusion**

The goal of this case-study research was to examine the perceptions of pivotal players in one UB program about how the director impacted the project. This research applied the model of authoritarian leadership. After careful analyses of the data gathered through interviews, results suggested that the director of the Midwestern University UB program has been successful, serving for the past 15 years until retirement at the end of May, 2014. The autocratic-leadership model employed in the program was appropriate because the director was the only full-time established employee in the program. This type of leadership was needed to direct part-time employees who may have been seasonal employees, students, and parents. Students who took part in the interviews indicated that the director was a strong and direct leader—a mother figure or family member—and appreciated the no-nonsense style because it kept them on task, taking part in the UB activities, college tours, preparing for the ACT, completing college applications and financial-aid packets, enrolling in college, and graduating from the institution. The director said it was necessary to tone down being so direct because some people did not respond well. However, students and the college administrator in the interviews appreciated the autocratic-leadership style because without it, the program may have ceased to exist.

A successful UB program requires the following elements to enroll students in the program, retain students in the program, and graduate students from the program. The
foundation of this program is the summer and tutorial programs. In this case study, students indicated that the themes of help/opportunities, family, role model, college tours and field trips, ACT and college preparedness and life lessons assisted students from low-income and first-generation backgrounds who may have lacked the environmental and family support to reach the goal of postsecondary education. In addition to the academic component, in this case study, a director who was empathetic to the plight of students and families was equally important in the success of the program as tutorials and summer programs. Directors should not only ensure they provide resources for their students to be successful, but also create an environment where students can thrive and feel supported by their peers and the staff of the program.

Outreach programs, such as UB, were implemented throughout the country in an attempt to provide equal opportunity for all students who desired to pursue higher education (Thayer, 2007). The UB program is the oldest TRIO program in existence, established under the administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson as a measure to combat generational poverty (Thayer, 2007). However, in the second decade of the 21st century, society continues to witness a roll back of programs and resources established to fight poverty in this country. Rosser, Johnsrud, and Heck (2003) indicated the several criteria needed to be an effective leader: personal management skills, staff and student recruitment skills, leadership skills, experience with underrepresented groups, and political skills to name a few. The themes that emerged from the student groups—family, college tours, approachable director, ACT and college preparedness, life lessons, role model, and giving back—define effective leadership. Although, resources are pivotal for the survival of these programs, students and administrators suggested that having a
strong, decisive, and caring director, as the Midwestern University’s UB program has demonstrated, is equally or more vital in the lives of its participants.
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Appendix A

Interview Questions for Upward Bound Director

Director Questions

Please talk to me about the evolution of the program from when you started until now?

What are the major challenges you have faced as director of the Upward Bound Program in providing services to students?

Please talk to me about the continued existence of this program at your university and why the program is needed?

Do you believe you are meeting the needs of your student population today with the changes in budget and from the Department of Education?

How would you describe your leadership style?

Has the institution supported your program? If so, please explain.

What measure have you taken to cope with new objectives set by the Department of Education?

What measure have you taken to cope with budget changes?

Has programming and activities changed since you began working with students? If so, explain.

Has technology over the past decade impacted your program? If so, please explain.

What are the benefits students gain from being a participant in your program?
Appendix B

Interview Questions for Former/Current Upward Bound Students

Describe your experiences in being in the Upward Bound program under this director?

Describe the opportunities that you had to interact with the director?

How did the director organize the program during your time in the project? (Tutorials, Saturday programming, field trips, staff set up)

How would you describe your director’s leadership style in the program?

What benefits have you and your peers gained being in this program?
Appendix C

Interview Questions for College Administrator

What does Upward Bound mean to the institution?

What are your experiences in working with Upward Bound’s director?

How do you explain the evolution of the Upward Bound program throughout the changing political environment?

How do you describe the director’s leadership style?

What have been the challenges at your institution as it relates to the UB program?

What are the benefits the students receive in being a participant in the program?

Does the institution support the director in terms of budget, facilities in assisting program to meet their objectives? If so, please explain.
Appendix D

High School Student A

OK, My name is Anthony Quinn and I am the interviewer for this ahhh current....
study I am interviewing current high school student A ahhhhh today is March 7th, 2014 and the time is 10:36. Ahhhh…….. just want to reiterate if there is a question in here I ask ummm if you are uncomfortable with it please let me know.

Student A “ok”

We could pass it up and go to the next question.

Ahhhh I want to thank you for taking this time out to do the interview.

Student A. Thank You

Ok

The first question is, what grade are you in currently?

12

12th grade?

Yes

Ok. Have you been in this school all four years?

Yes I have.

Ok

How long have you been in the Upward Bound Program?

I started in the 10th grade back so that was like 2011

Ahh…….. I…. ahhh……..started in the 10th grade that was like 2011 so

Ok Ahhh What brought you to the program?

(Nervous laughter) Ahhh Actually, I was kind of running away from it, but my Auntie was the one who signed me up for it.

Ok…why were you running away from it? Slight laughter

(Slight laughter) Because I , you know I wasn’t born in Detroit, I was born in New York ummmmm and its like I didn’t feel like that I want to be here because I felt like my dad didn’t want me, but, I just, you know, decided to give it a chance because my Auntie felt
it was good for me to, you know, do some extra ah extra-curricular activity you know get to know people.

Ok. Alright, thanks.

Ahhhhh, Do you remember when you first met Ms. James?

Nooo, it’s kind of a blur.

It’s a blur?

Yeah

Ok. Alright. Ahhhh SO when you got introduced to the program was it through her or somebody else on the staff?

I think it was Ms. Tracey.

Ms Tracey? She is the……?

She was ahhh Counselor?

An advisor as well, but she doesn’t work with us anymore.

OK and you said you’ve been in, you said you been in the program for three years?

Three years, yeah.

Ok this is your 3rd year.

Ahhhhh………. Describe your experiences in being in the Upward Bound program under Ms. James?

It’s been ahhh great experience. Because, because like she knew that I didn’t want to be here. She know how to respond to me. But she would, she would like talk to me like “I know you don’t want to be here but just give it a try and you know we do a lot of different stuff” and she like she encouraged me to ummm to stay in the program and it….. it…… help because I actually enjoy Upward Bound now.

Ah umm what can you give me some examples how she encourage you or what she did to make you want to stay and be a part of the program.

Yeah ummm I would like I would always come with an upset face always looked angry at everybody, didn’t want to talk to anybody. And she was like ummmm you should like try to meet with people and ummm after that, I took her advice and would and I had met new friends and I I had I even I talk to everybody in the program now.
Ok…. Ok……. ummm……. Describe the opportunities that you had to interact with the director? Sooo…. throughout your 3 years how, what opportunities arose for you to interact with Ms. James? Like is it completing the FAFSA or

Student coughs

Or projects you have to do, summer program or (inaudible) can you describe some of those times when you had to interact?

Ummmmm, she made me ummm like she was she encouraged us like to do a lot of scholarships through the school and if we need help with anything at all just ask her. She’ll try to help us with any problems we had (pause) and you know she just made us like do everything and like for us to do to try to get good grades and if we didn’t get the best grades she try to see what we need help on so we work on to improve that where we need help in.

So let’s take the example of like trying to improve the grades

Yeah like

What did she do exactly with you if..?

Like If she had to stay after school with us she stayed or she get Ms. Jackson or anybody else who

Now who’s Ms. Jackson?

Ummm……. She took Ms. Tracy place.

She’s a that she’s a counselor or advisor?

No Advisor.

Ok.

Administrative Advisor.

Administrative Advisor ok. Go ahead.

Oh yeah she ummm I ask Ms. Jackson, or Ms. Harris or ummm any other mentor that was able to help the student and ok.

Soooo…. Ahh…….. trying to get ahh so exactly….. I know you told me how they talk to you about trying to set up…exactly what do you do that sets them up. ….You see? She required tutoring…I mean what ……..what……

(Interrupts) Yeah we had to come for tutoring for at least 2 hours a week and if we didn’t you know we wouldn’t be able to do ummmm the other like activities the fun activities
Such as?

Ummmm like we would we go on trips, go bowling, go to MU, go out to eat. Ummmm we went paint balling once, (laughter) that was real fun ummmm we went rock climbing we went to we spent I think a month at MU. And we went to Ce….

Ahhhh…….. Cedar Point ahhh we do a lot of activities.

So she……. it’s basically…….. got incentives to keep your grades up?

Yeah.

Ok. Alright. How did the director organize the program during your time in the project? Such as Tutorials, not sure if you had Saturday programming,

Ummhhmmmm.
Field trips, staff how…. how… is that organize?

Ummmm every month like we have a calendar and she give us agendas and we have a meeting every Tuesday not every Tuesday in the month but like every first Tuesday in the month and we’ll meet and she’ll tell us like what’s going on this month what….

What……… day do we have ahhhh college goal Saturday and afterschool we can meet up and find out if we missed anything.

Ok. How long are those meetings in general?

Like, the most that gone for like an hour or usually like 30 to 45 minutes long.

And, exactly what do you talk about in those meetings?

ahhhh we talk about the ca… ahh the agendas like exactly what’s going on this month if we have any ummmm college goal Saturday ummmm if we even going out of town because we have sometimes we ahhh get breaks and she takes us out to go see colleges and tours and stuff.

Ok and how long are those college tours when you go as if…. 

Usually it’s a week or at least 2 days it depends how long we have on 3 days it just depends.

Well where have you gone in the past on these college tours?

(Laughter) Some of them I really don’t remember. I remember we went to CMU, ummm Albion I think it’s called Albion. Ummmm Northern, Northwestern, Oakland ummmm we went to Chicago and I don’t remember what school it was. It was a nice school it was nice view and everything. I don’t know what school.

Was it the University Chicago?
I think we did go there. But it wasn’t that. I think it was NNN….

Northwestern?

Yeah

Ok… ok…. ummmmm… Your tutorial program, how is that set up what….. what….. are the days, times, and where is it held how is that set up?

Ummmm we have

And who is there for tutoring…

We have tutoring us…, sometimes Ms. James ahh Ms. James is there every Wednesday unless she has to go to school. But we have tutoring Tuesday and Thursday from 330 to 5 sigh and we can come like there her from 9 to 5 so we can come in during our lunch hour if we have any problems we can come see them you know whenever we have time we come see.

Ok, alright, ummmm and the staff how is that set up? Your staff you have the director and you have an ummm administrative assistant

An administrative assistant and teachers

And teachers?

Yeah.

Ok.

So is there an advisor on the staff like an Academic Skills Coordinator?

What do you mean like with the different subjects?

Ahhhh would, that would be a tutor. I’m just trying to see…so it’s just a basically with the Upward Staff is a director and the Administrator Assistant? Correct?

Ummmmmm

Ok alright. Ummmm…… How would you describe your director’s leadership style in the program?

Ummmmmm She’s pretty good at what she does. Even though she has a lot of stuff on her plate in dealing with students’ you know attitudes and stuff she professionally…she can talk to you ….you know if you need so.

So are you ahhhh so how would you describe that as? Down to earth ahhh…

(Student laughter)
How would you describe it?

Ummmmm……. Well she is a well-rounded person. I don’t know like….. like………. she can be mean sometimes

(Laughter)

She can be really sweet at times. And yeah…yeah she like very concern, like she’s sweet awesome person. She’s always competitive like every time we try go bowling or something you know “I can beat you!” And you know, yeah.

Ummmmm.. What benefits have you and your peers gained from being in the program?

Well, sometimes you know have a little you know I get into my moods I don’t want to talk to anybody and just you know I just shut down. But it ummmm…. it has open me, it made me look at my attitude differently cause people said I looked mad but I as the time went on they knew I wasn’t that person they was like you should smile more and stuff and it made me like want to talk to other students and I just stay to…… to……. the people I know it made me want to branch out get to know that person you know maybe we’ll have something in common.

So you said it made you more open to meet new people

Yeah

Ok. Ummmmm have……. do you see any other benefits for you or if you look at some of your friends from how when they first started to where they are now what benefits they got from being in the program?

I think it’s the same as well as me and also like ummm school it made them want to do good in school also and to get and you can always count on Upward Bound for help.

Alright that’s about it. Ok. Time is 10:47. We are concluding this interview ahhhhhh student A I would like to thank you against for taking part in this interview

Thank you

…Ahhhh there may come a time before this study is completed that I may come back and may have to ask you some follow up questions.

Ok

SO that wouldn’t be an issue with you?

No it wouldn’t

Ummmmm… so if that is the case I will ahhh…. ahhh… let Ms. James know and

OK.
Go from there and again, Thank you.

Thank You (laughter).

Alright.

Thank You.

OK.
Appendix E

High School Student B

I have current high school student b ummm, we are about to ahhh conduct an interview with student b it is now 10:50 ummm March 7th 2014. Ummm I want to say thank you for taking part in this interview ummm just a reminder if there is a question you’re not comfortable with please let me know and then we can pass that question and go on to the next one. Ummm do you have any questions for me before we get started?

No

Ok ummmm How long umm have you been in this high school?

4 years

4 years, So you’ve been here for all four years?

Yep

Ummm wha… and you’re a 12th grader?

Yep

OK, Ummmmm….. when did you join the upward bound program?

Ummmm, I actually started coming when I was in the 9th grade but I wasn’t actually in the program until I was in the 10th grade.

10th grade, ok. So you been in here technically for 3 years.

Yeah ok ummmm what made you join the program?

Ahhhh, Actually it was one of my friends she had got a application for here and when she was like coming up the hallway I saw her and I said what’s that? And she was like its an application for Upward Bound and I was like what is that? And she started telling me its like college preparatory, help you with your scholarships, ACT and all that. And, I’m like well I need help with that. So, I just came down here like the same day like… like not even 5 minutes later I was like I want to be in your program. And, they was like what is it about? (Quietly say) And I was like ummmm all that college stuff. (Student laughter)

Ok ummm DO you remember who did you meet when you first inquired about the program? Or who was the staff member you met?

Ahhhhh Ms. oooooo ahhhhh college advisor and I think it was Ms. James I think they were in here together doing some type of pap..paper work, but I’m not sure. But I know it was Ms. OOOO
Ok….alright.

Describe your experiences in being in the Upward Bound program under this director or Ms James?

Ummmmm, I would say it’s pretty good because she’s like a good role model. Like even though sometimes I slack off I know that…… there still things that needs to be done in preparation towards college, ACT, applications and all that. Because right now I’m doing scholarships and there’s like a whole bunch I gotta do so I got keep on time…… time of my track while still like making sure everything is how it suppose to be.

Ummmmhmmm

She is always like stay in school.

Ok. Ummm any other experiences from the years you’ve been in that you like to talk about?

Ummm…………….. They feed us a lot (laughter). Make me feel good and fat some times (laughter). Ummmm it’s like a good shoulder to lean on like doing school times, hard times and what not and somebody just talks to you. That’s it.

Describe the opportunities that you had to interact with the director or Ms. James? Or could you describe a few opp ahhhhhh times that you had to actually interact with her.

Ahhhhhh slight laughter I interact with her like all the time. Like I don’t just like diss her or what not, but I say college tours like recently we were on a college tour back in February and it was just like ahhh ssss seniors talking about what we’re going to do, how we going to do it ummmmmm Like when we interact it’s not like us sitting down talking it’s basically like me asking a questions, she giving me advice or things she think I should know like I’m trying to choose between colleges right now and she was like you’re choosing the best field that’s for you and when I was asking about the scholarships and she was like well whatever colleges you get accepted to they will tell you how much sss money and scholarships you won, But everything is always different so you need to just check that out. And she always makes it known to me to like check everything twice say whatever you’re doing and all that. So.. hmmm.

Alright. Ummmm….. How did the director organize the program during your time in Upward Bound? So how was tutorials set up, how was like Saturday programming or field trips ah how was that set up?

Ahhhhhhhh Saturday….. we’ll we don’t really do anything on Saturdays if we do they will tell us in the meeting but usually if every third Saturday of the month we have College Goal Saturday and every second Tuesday of the month we have a meeting for like everybody. And like they set up parent meetings like for your report card what you want to do better and what you could of done better you know you could of done better, but like your goals and what not.
Ummmmmm what about tutorials? How is that set up?

What’s tutorials?

Ahh you don’t…tutorials…..ok ahhh fieldtrips please?

(Smacks teeth) Fieldtrips…….(smacks teeth) I don’t know (student tapping table) if I ever been on a field trip field trip……well…yeah…. Yeah….I can’t say that I can’t say that (tapping table) because ummmm field trip…… our fieldtrips are always kind of big and ummm and every time on our fieldtrips it’s like (pause) we do ,ok like on the ummmmm last year we went on the holocaust museum…..so basically it’s something we can learn from. Like… Like.. every trip is something we can learn from. Then it’s like ACT,

So

And that whole strange world there….

Soooo do the students take part in deciding where you you’re going or is it just something the staff and director comes to tell you we’re going here or do you take part in the decision where you going?

Ummmmmm…. No.

Ok alright, ummmm…. How would you describe your director’s leadership style in the program?

Oh yeah. It’s like awesome. Because she’s not really like awkward and like strict down (tapping table). But She’s somebody you can laugh with (tapping table) at the same time she’s somebody you take (tapping table) seriously because (tapping table)you know she has that type of authority.

Ahhhhh ok ummmm anything else?

No.

(Student tapping table) What benefits have you and your peers gained being in the program?

Oh gosh, ahhhhh well first like any type of thing to do with college I learned in Upward Bound like hands down. Ummmmm, I gained friends in Upward Bound like my Upward Bound senior buddies and what not we have grown closer because of Upward Bound. Ummmmm (smacks teeth) ahhhh I have to say ACT wise and like me preparing myself every time I come to Upward Bound its always like that mindset you’re preparing for the best. And they always say like preparation.

Ok ummm alright..anything else you want to add?

(Non Verbal) shakes her head no.
Ok ahhhhhh Thank you for taking part

Ahhh…. Thank you

In this interview ahhhh….. (Student laughter) the interview with Student B has just concluded ummmm there may be a time down the road that I may have to re….ahh interview just to get some clarifications on anything you said today. Would that be an issue?

Ohhh no.

If that happens I will talk to ahhhh Ms. James first and we’ll set that up.

But, Once again thank you for your time.

(Enthusiastically say) You’re welcome

I really appreciate it. Ok. Thank you.
Appendix F

High School Student C

Ok, I am with High School student C. It is now 12:38PM, April 4, 2014. Ummmm, I just want to say thank you for taking the time out and doing this interview with me. I’m going to ask you a series of questions, just think about it and just tell me, ahhh just answer the best as you can. If there is a question you’re not comfortable with or ….if you just uncomfortable with let me know and we could pass it up and go to the next question. OK?

Alright.

Alright. Ummmm, first question, what year are you in at school?

2014

2014. So you’re 18 and a senior here

Yes

At school. Ok, ahhhhh, what year did you join Upward Bound?

I joined Upward Bound in 2010, I believe. Ummmm, I been in since 9th grade year.

Ok

Sooooo

So this is your fourth year in the program?

Yes

Ok. Can you describe your first encounter or first meeting with Ms. Jam….. Ms. James?

My first meeting was ummmm actually the first ahhh year when ummm wanted to become apar…..ummmmm part of Upward Bound and ummmm I got to admit it was a meeting with me and my mom and she told me what I had to do and, you know, I had…..I get tutoring in that ummm it would be it……pretty much they will help me with my grades. And, we’ll be going to visit different colleges and different activities.

OK. Ummm …..Anything else you want to share about that?

Ummmmmm, well, well it was my first year……what made me continue Upward Bound was that ummmm, my first year I really enjoyed it cause I never been out of Detroit. And, when I was, when I joined here we went to visit ummmm different colleges and different, you know, cities and just countries and all that. And, I really like it so I continue to stay and do more.
So, the college visits made an impact on you?

Yes, because I always wanted to visit different colleges and things like that.

What colleges did you visit? Do you recall?

Well, I can’t remember, remember the ones that we visited and ummmm 9th grade year, but most of it it we visited ummmm Bethune Cookman, ummmmmm, Caaa, ……what was the name, Clarke! Spelman….. Atlanta, Ummmmm, ummmm, whatever, Michigan State, ummmmmm we visited pretty much (inaudible)…..The main one that we always go visited is M…MU which is Midwestern University.

OK. Have you decided on what school you’re going to next year?

Ummmmm, well, ummmm, not really. I mean I have two colleges that I’ve been accepted to so far. Ummmmm OCC is one of them and Henry Ford.

Ok. Describe your experiences in being in the Upward Bound program under this director? You kind of touched upon it a little bit just…..some experiences with being in this program with her.

Ummmmm, so many experiences I’ve had is ummmm Prom Closet. When we get dresses together for girls who can’t afford prom dresses. And, we gather at ummm one of our….Ms. Oliver’s church and you know we do Prom Closet there. And, pretty much we made the girls to say yes to the dress.

Ohhh ok.

Ummmmm, we also did when we be on on campus, we would go over the summer, we would do the summer academy and you know ummm spend the 3 weeks on campus at Midwestern and do fun activities with our mentors and go to class. Pretty much we had the college experience.

Ok. Is the Prom Closet something that Ms. James set up?

Ummmmmm.

Ok. Ok. Then you all just volunteering? Ok

(Shakes head yes)

Well that was really it was a requirement.

Oh it was a requirement?

Requirement. Oh….. yeah

Community service
Yes.

OK. OK.

And Ummm, we had no choice. Really, it was mandatory.

Ok. Ok I gotcha.

Ok, ahhh, Describe the opportunities that you had to interact with the director? So, any, ahhh meetings with Ms. James that stands out to you? Ahhh Describe those?

Ummmmm, well, one meeting that really got to me, you know, what really made me start thinking about her was when ummmm I was out on maternity leave and I just got back and, you know, she was telling me that my life was pretty much going to change after I had my baby or whatever, you know and all that. And, ummm when we had to do the bridge program over the summer, ummmmm, I told her like you know I don’t think I can do it. You know, I was telling her. But, Ms. James.........I love Ms. James because you know she is a real, she is a real person. You know, she, she helps…….she…. she’s like a counselor to me. I can come talk to her about anything and she….she just awesome, like I love her to death.

Ummmmmm, how did the director organize the program during your time in the project? So, like tutorials, how tutorials set up, what days of the week do you go, or set-up, or Saturday, or fieldtrips…..how is that set-up?

Ummmmm, well, they, we go, when we go to the month, monthly meetings, we have to, ummmmm, they tell us, they give us a schedule. But, we meet with…..what we need to expect in the next couple of months and all that and what’s mandatory. Ummmmm, College Goal Saturday is one of the things that we do over on, ummm, the weekends. Ummm, we have to go to tutoring, ummm, twice a week, I believe. Twice a week and you have to be there for like a hour or two. Ha….yeah, I think a hour or two. And, ummmmm

What days of the week do you do tutoring?

Well, funny, since this is an all-girls school, we got tutoring, we have tutoring……we can do tutoring really any day of the week. Because we can do it sometimes during our ummm, lunch-break or, or ummm you can stay after school. But ours is from Monday ummm , (pause) I believe, well, so far, I believe that ours, that the girls is Monday and Wednesdays.

Ok. Ok.

But, yeah.

There’s a second school that do their tutoring, correct?

Yes.
Ummmm, what about fieldtrips? Now you’ve mentioned something about ummm ahhhh, college visits. How

(student begins talking)

Yes. We actually…..

just want to know how each one of those trips set up (finishing up question)?

(Student continues) ……have the ahh ummmm, we actually have a field trip coming up. Umm It’s a three, daa…ummm,, well this one is called a three day college tour for April. You know we, ummm go visit different colleges for like a ahhhh three day, three days or that kind of stuff. And, ummmm, (pause), ummmm, it’s just (pause) we have to go pretty much…… don’t have to go on all of the trips, but it’s really mandatory.

Ok.

But if it’s something that came up then she excuses, but most of the time all of the trips are mandatory. And, it’s fun because she makes it fun. You know, ummmm one fieldtrip we went on was when we went paintballing and Carrie got her……..

(Laughs)

It was real fun. So, yes she is a, she makes things fun. You know.

Ok. Ummmmm, How would you describe your director’s leadership style in the program?

She (pause) she just, I don’t know how to explain it. Ummmm (pause), I (pause), I look up to her Ms. James. You know, I look up to her as a men….. mentor,

Why do you look up to her?

Because, she kn….., she, she know that I been through a lot. And, she knows, she know me very well. So like when something is wrong with me she can, I can say nothing is wrong with me, but she know that is something wrong with me. So, it’s not no way that I can just go on about my day without her bugging me or saying, you know, we need to talk. You know, I know there’s something going on and she will literally sit there talk to me and, you know, encourage me to do good and all of that. You know, she tells me what I can do. Even when I say I can’t do something she always tell me don’t ever say can’t. Because can’t should really, really shouldn’t be in my voca…..our vocabulary. You know, and she just encourage me to do so much, but she, she know that I’m a be successful in life.

Alright. Anything else you want to add?

(Shakes head no)
Ok. Our last question, what benefits have you and your peers gained being in this program?

I’ve actually gained a lot. Like, ummm (pause), I learned how to study. I’ve learned …..I’ve learned a lot of things that I didn’t know how to do before I got into this program. And, it just feels so good, because I came so far. If it really, I think that if it wasn’t for this program I wouldn’t be as far as I am today.

Ok. Ummmm, anything else you would like to add about the program or Ms. James?

I love them! They just, I just love when she……I just saw her yesterday actually, and , “Hey, Ms. James!” and she was like, “Hey!!! So how’s everything going?” She, that is one thing she always ask me is how’s everything going. You know, she makes sure that I’m on track. You know, when something wrong, she ummm, when I, she know, she know me pretty much. She just know when something not going right. But, yes. I just love her to death.

Ok. Well that concludes the interview. Once again, I want to thank you for taking time out doing this interview. Ummmm, I will transcribe it and once I do I’ll send a copy to Ms. James to give to you just to say, “Ok, yeah that is what we said talked about in the interview” and just ok it and if you, something you want to kind of express more, or change a little bit, just let me know and ummmm we can go from there. And, once again, thank you.

Thank you!
Appendix G

College Student A

Ok. I am with College student A. It is March 14th at 6:01PM Ahhhh, I just want to thank you for taking part in this interview. Ummmmm

You’re welcome.

Ummmm ummmm my first question is where are you currently in your education?

At what school?

Ah ah what ah ah level…are you.. undergrad?

I’m a ahhh yeah undergrad, sophomore year.

Ok. Ummm, what years were you involved in the Upward Bound program?

I was involved in the Upward Bound program from 2008 to 2012.

Ok. Ahhhh sss so you joined in what year did you join the program?

In 2008.

Ahhhh Ummmmmm first question… Describe your experiences in being in the Upward Bound program under ahhhhh Ms. James.

Ummmm During ahh my time in the Upward Bound program from 2008 to 2012, ahhhh I participated in umm a college preparatory program ummm pretty much they gave us like you know different views in far as like preparing for college, being engaged in ummm an on campus enrichment program up at Midwestern University each summer. Where we took some courses and we learn some different things ummm and we also did ahhh out of class learning experience following the Midwestern University ahhh experience. And, we went like to a couple places out of town. Just to name a few we went to Florida, and Tennessee and ahh Kentucky, lots of different places like that. Just to get an outside ummm view of the world. Again, outside of Detroit, just seeing how the world is outside of Detroit. Ummm and yeah we also, they also had umm afterschool ummm tutoring, where they assist us with ummm a lot of our homework we received at school. Ahhh we did much umm in ACT prep where they assist us with ummm you know getting higher scores ummm on the ACT test and things like that.

Ok. Ummmmm is there anything you like to add to that…

Ummmm, you know, can you be more specific, what do you want me ahhhhh to speak about.
Im just, im just, want to know about your experiences under Ms. James in dealing with Ms. James in the program. And and, you kind of told me with theeeeee ACT, and the college travel…..so I’m just if anything else comes to mind as far as your experiences in the program under Ms. James.

Yeah, the experiences, the experiences was absolutely outstanding. It was amazing. Ummmm, I, I don’t know, it was, it was thh experience unique to any experience I ever, you know, encountered. Ummmm, it there, pretty much being a part of the program is where I found out who I was as a person. You know, what it is I wanted to do with my life. You know, prior to going to the program I had no idea how I was going to get to college ummmm, but definitely after leaving the program ummm you know, they assisted me tremendously ummmm with going through the process of you know filling out the col… college applications, ummmm filling out scholarships things like that (volume pushed up on phone caused beeping). So, it was definitely an awesome, awesome awesome experience. Ummm, just to say, you know, to to know to say the least. Ummmm, anything like I would definitely do it all over again and recommend this program for anybody who, you know, who’s interested, or you know, don’t know what is they want to do with their life or how they going to get to college. You know, coming from like the circumstances that I come from, you know, ummmm low-income family, ahhh first generation college student. Upward Bound was definitely a great assistance as far as going to college.

Ok Thank You. Ahhhh, Describe the opportunities that you had to interact with the director? So, one on one interactions with the director.

Ok, ummm, One on one interactions with Ms. James were always crazy. Ummmm, She always gave me the best and the most honest ummmm advice whenever I interacted with her. Ummmm she, I don’t know, I always, most of the times when I spoke to Ms. James it was to receive advice or to talk to her about something. (Sigh) Ummmm you know that was really bothering me or talk to her about, you know, anything to do with academics, or personal life and it was, just it was, Ms. James was always someone I can speak to. Ummmm, She was always there to provide, you know, really really ummmm good advice like I said earlier. Ummmm, what else did I say? I don’t know (student laughter) what, I don’t know.

Ok. Ok ahhh anything else you want to add before I move to the next question?

Ummmmmmmmmmm no. I ah no.

Ok. Alright, How did the director organize the program during your time in the project? So, how was the tutorials set up, Saturday programming, field trips, your staff at the time, how was it set up?

How was it set up during your time in the program? Your Saturday programming….how was the different activities set up?
Ummmmm so .. I mean it’s (student laughter)...I’m young but my memory is kind of bad (student laughter). But if I remember correctly we had tutoring ummmmm... Monday-Thursday, I believe. Ummmmm, and I went for the most part up until my sen...ahhh senior year, I went everyday from Monday-Thursday. If I remember correctly. Ummm, I can’t remember exactly how it worked. Cause, I don’t know, Its Its kind of blurred, but ummmm....Yeah, my senior year I went every Monday and Wednesday. Received tutoring and......What was your other question?

Ummmm Saturday programming, field trips, your staff ahhh in the program.

I don’t remember doing Saturday programming. I don’t think we ever did that except for during the summer time like a week before we went to Midland University. Ahh that’s I don’t remember ummm we didn’t, I don’t think we ever ahh, maybe we did, I don’t remember. I don’t think we ever had Saturday experience.

Ok

Not from my experience. I never engaged in it anyways if we did.

Ok. The field trips was pretty much what you mentioned earlier about college visits, down to Florida and places like that…

Yeah, Yeah

Ok

Do you want me to go more in depth with those?

If you want to, if you want to share.

Yeah, ummmm I would say that during the out of classroom experiences ummm was was definitely, ummmm, definitely, ahh I guess definitely..... How can I say it? It was just an all around great experience, ummmm ,well ah it was an all-around great experience. Ummm Like me personally, had I had it not been for Upward Bound I would have never ummm had those opportunities, to you know, venture off to different states and you know go to historical sites and learn different things about different colleges. And, being exposed to ummmm historical black college life. Umm, Because right now I’m at ahhh Historical Black College. And it’s funny because I I actually never would of chosen ummm Historical Black College. But because of Upward Bound ummmm and my experience with ummm touring ummm HBCU’s ahhh that drew my attention or that, you know, made me understand it better that what it was that HBCUs represent. Ummm so, for me, during the out of classroom learning experience was really really great. It was just awesome. I mean because everything, not to mention might the fact that it was free, but, besides the fact that it was free it was just all around really really great experience. That most most kids that come from where I come from don’t get to experience. So. Yeah.

Ok. Thanks. Oh.. How would you describe your director’s leadership style in the program?
Amazing! (Student laughter) I don’t know maybe I use that word a little bit too much, but I swear it was absolutely amazing ummmm with Ms. James. She was just, she was, she was always in tune with what the students actually need ahhh needed, you know, in order to get where they needed to go. She was always in tune. Like, when I tell you like outside of the tutoring, outside of the academics, outside of all of that….when I tell you Ms. James was like absolutely amazing…..like with personal life and, you know, assisting me like, you know I remember one Thanksgiving she came to my house and brought like a Thanksgiving basket like her leadership, period, was just outstanding ummmm with the program. I don’t think, ahhh shee I don’t (sigh) know, to me, to be quite honest, she, her, her leadership is quite unique compared to ummmm other leadership that I’ve seen at other Upward Bounds. Ummm I would, I definitely, I wou…..I would say that The Midland University’s Upward Bound program because of her ummmm it’s it’s a program that’s just one of a kind. You know, definitely one of a kind. The interaction, the close knit, you know, family that she built under her leadership. It’s just, it’s just amazing.

Ok. Ummmm What benefits have you and your peers, you pretty much said a lot of it earlier, but what benefits have you and yours peers gained being in this program?

(Laughter from both interviewer and interviewee).

Tons, tons of benefits. I mean, tons, I don’t even, honestly, I don’t even know where to start. Ummm, I will say that because of Upward Bound ummm I have been, ummmm you know, they assisted me tremendously with like, you know, filling out ahhhh college applications like I said earlier, filling out scholarship applications. Aahhhhh And because of their assistance with filling out college applications. One of my leaders ummmm of the program wrote the recommendation for me for ummmm the Bill and Melinda Gates Millenial Scholarship and I was later named ummmm a recipient of that scholarship. So, the benefits I get from the ummm that program of students, you know, the benefits the students get from the program altogether its really really ummmm amazing. Ummm (laughs) I want to go more into detail. I’m trying to remember exactly like…..ahhhhhhhummmm….even the life skills period, ummm them providing life skills, Hold on for a second….them providing life skills and just….I don’t, I don’t how can I say it?? Weeee, I don’t I don’t, I’m sorry. (Sighs) It so much like the program provided so much for us. Its almost impossible to just name everything like….The The endless summers, you know, taking us away from, you know, ummmm, taking us away from the neighborhood. And, to the ummm to the ahh experiences of like, you know, during the college fairs and ummm benefitting like that and just you know……Benefitting through the connections ummmm we made. Because of the different events and the different people we encountered because of Upward Bound. Ummm I know that Upward Bound was like the first, the first, program to ever introduce me to the idea of having ummm a business card. And, because of that, because of that, you know like……I just learned a lot! I learned a lot. I’m sorry if I’m like kind of sounding like all over the place.

No.

like…..
No. You, you, you’re ok. Ok, Ummmm anything else that you would like to add before we wrap this up?

Ummmmmmmm, noooooooo, noooooooo, I don’t think so. I, I don’t…no.

Ok. I I would like to thank you once again for taking part in this interview. Ummmmmm, ahhh, I will transcribe it and send you a transcription of the interview just to let you check over it..see if you’re ok with everything that was transcribe from the interview.

Ok (tape distortion)

Ahhhhhh, If I have any questions or clarifications about anything you said, I will send you an email or give you a call, if you don’t mind, just to get some clarifications if, if I have any.

Well that’s fine.

Ummmmm, like I said, once again, I want to thank you for ummmm taking part in this interview. So, I’m gonna stop the tape right now.
Appendix H

College Student B

Ok. My name is Anthony Quinn and I am the interviewer for this current study. I am interviewing Current College Student B. Today is March 29th, 2014 and the time is 10:02AM. Ahhhhh….. first, I want to thank you for taking part in this interview.

Ok.

Also, I want to reiterate if there is a question in here you’re not comfortable with, just let me know and we can pass up the question. Ok?

Ok.

Alright. My first question is, what school do you currently attend?

Midwestern University.

Ok. Ummmm……. What year are you in school?

I’m a senior.

Senior, ok.

Ummmm….. How many years did you participate in the Upward Bound Program?

Participated for 3 years. My 10th grade year until I graduated.

Ok, so you joined in your sophomore year in high school?

Yes.

Ok.

Ahhhh….. can you describe ahhh or do you remember your first time meeting Ms. James?

Ummmmmm……. I do not. It seems like I have known her forever. I can’t really recall the first moment when I met her.

Ok. Do you remember what brought you or what led you to join the program?

I was because of XXXXX took over Northern School I was friends with some of the people who went to Northern and they were in Upward Bound and they were talking about all of their experiences and all what they were doing. So, I just went down to the office and try to find out what it was about.

Ok
And that is how I joined.

Did anything about their experiences stick out to you? Any particular thing they said?

Yes. The motto for Upward Bound was where preparation meets opportunity.

Ummmhmmmm.

Ahhhh........ where preparation meets opportunity.

Ok. Can you repeat......

(inaudible)

Can you repeat that again?

Where preparation meets opportunity.

Ok. Ok. Ok. My next question is, describe your experiences in being in the Upward Bound program under this director.

Well, it was, it was very eye opening. I had a lot of opportunities come my way and I was prepared to meet those opportunities. Because Ms. James made sure that we knew what we were doing that we were prepared for what we were getting in to.

Ok. Ummmmmm........ can you describe any of those opportunities can da.... can you kind of elaborate on that?

Yes. Like, just going to college in general. I knew nothing about college while I was in high school until I was in Upward Bound. Just trying to access to the......aahhh....... like the ACT prep and tutoring and mentoring. Those type ....type ahhhh....... of opportunities.

Ok. Ummmmmm........ Describe the opportunities that you had to interact with this director? So, any experiences that you interacted with her one on one.

There was always time to go down to the Upward Bound room. And, we would talk and after school tutoring and.....I, I, was always in the Upward Bound......If I wasn’t in class I was in the Upward Bound room.

Ok ummmm, How did the director organize the program during your time in the project? So, how was the tutorials set up when you went, ummmm........ Saturday programming, field trips, how, how was that set up?

Hmmmm........ really well organize. Like, after school we would come in and then we’ll talk a little bit about our day, what was going on with all the kids and then we sit down and do tutoring and we had mentors there to help us with our tutoring.....And, then we’ll
have like ACT prep so everyone would stop what they were doing. We’ll work on math questions or reading and English just getting them to study for the ACT.

Ok, Ummmmm…….. What, how about as far as field trips?

Fieldtrips?

Ummmmmmm.

Fieldtrips, I know I can recall only the fieldtrips from the summer time. We would go on the college tours which was really well organize. We had experience with colleges that we would never have would have had the opportunity to have we were….weren’t in Upward Bound.

Ok. Ummmm was, is the college tours and you being at Midwestern University for the Upward Bound program is that what led you to go to the school eventually?

Yes it was. Since I was in the program we would come up here for three weeks in the summer. And I just, I really loved the environment so I came here.

Ok

And you know with all of the other college tours and Ivy League schools and Historically Black colleges, Midwestern just seemed like the right fit. Because, because of Ms. James and how she, you know, promoted Midwestern University.

Could you elaborate on your three weeks in the program during the summertime exactly what did you do during those three weeks? Could you explain that?

During the three weeks, during the day we would do hardcore work. By, we would prepare for our next set of classes. Like, if were in the 10th grade we would prepare for 11th grade classes. For fall we take like chemistry, biology we would work on that because……ahh and then we would prepare for the ACT. So, we’ll do… (inaudible) ACT prep what to look for, how to study for it, and how to be a good scorer. And, then during the evening time, we have mentors that would just hang out with us and we’ll talk about life and we’ll do activities with, with each other just getting to know each other.

Ok ummm…… How would you describe your director’s leadership style in the program? That means if, if

I have to say strong and direct

Strong and dir…..

She is the, She is a great leader. I really admire her. That… I….. I……aspired to be just like her. So…ahh…… I’m getting a degree in early childhood development, but I want to get my Master’s in Higher Education Administration so I can follow her footstep.
OK. When you stay strong and direct, can you give me an example of that?

She is very on point with what she wants and when she wants to accomplish. She sets goals. She makes sure that we are all aware of what the goals are and that we are all a part of the process in bringing up the program.

Ok, ok, ahhhh........ What benefits have you and, and, your peers gained being in this program? So, you kind of elabor…..talked about it little bit earlier, wha……….. what are the benefits you see being in this program……what you see your friends gained from being in this program?

The benefits are having the opportunity to get an education and ahhhhhh.......... just the opportunity to see what see the other side of something that I probably would not have had the opportunity to see. I… I probably would not, would not have been in college if it wasn’t for Upward Bound. I knew nothing about it. Just the network of people that I have met over the years…. Like, meeting people on college tours, I still interact with some of those people today. Like, the admission officer for MU who gave me the scholarship to come here. I still talk to him today. And, then checking up on me to see what I’m doing in college, just, where am I going, and helping me to….. to…….. see my next step in my education.

Ok could you repeat that last portion, I, I couldn’t get, get that.

I said I still talk to some of the people that I encountered at M…MU that were helping me with my endeavors to further my education.

Ok, Ok. Ummmmm......... is, oh, quick question ohhh........ what years were you in the Upward Bound program? I know you said sophomore to senior, but what years were those?

I started in the summer program of 2008.

2008?

And I went to 2010.

Ok 2008 to 2010. Ok. Ummmm............ Is there anything else that you would like to add about the program, Ms. James before we conclude this interview?

Ummmmmmm........ It’s a really great program. I...... I...... it’s unfortunate that is only for students who are, who really need it. So, like the inner-city kids. I wish that everyone had access to the information that we had. And, I would recomm…….. recommend it to anyone if they have the opportunity to join, to join it. Because its life changing.

Well, this concludes the interview. It is now 10:11…ummmm…… if you, ahhhh…… I would, as I mentioned earlier I will plan to transcribed this interview and email it to you. Aahhhhh......... if you have any questions after you receive it or any disputes just let me
know and we can fix that….ummmmmm……. I want, once again thank you for taking part in this interview.

You’re welcome.

And I ahhh……………. I will stop the recorder.
Appendix I

Graduate Student A

Ok we are about to conduct ahhh…… interview with graduate student A ummmm……. the time is 11:03 ahhh and the date is March 7th, 2014 ummmm I just want to thank you for taking part in this interview ahhh.

You’re welcome

Ahhhh……. as I mentioned earlier if there’s a question that you are not comfortable with let me know and we can pass up that question.

Alright.

Ummm, first I would like to say when did you join the Upward Bound program?

I join the………..

Or your time…… time…… frame (inaudible)

The time? Well I…… I……… join when I was a sophomore ummmm……. soooo……. what 2007…is umm when I join and I I Northern close down after my sophomore year as well sooo I ahhh still stuck around we drove from ummm the other high school that I went to to the Upward Bound parental meetings and stuff and parti……….. participated in the summer programs and things like that with (inaudible). Sighs ummmm whether it was for the ACT, I came here to prep for the ACTs ummmm came here to get mentored by some of the people ummm that already went through college and things like that just to ummmm take whatever knowledge they had of college and get as much advice ummm as I could get. Ummmmm SO in regards to helping me succeed. Sooo.

Ummmmm……. What made you join the program?

Well it it’s funny how I join ummm my original intention ummm was to just get a job because there was a job that I applied for at the time, well internship actually that I applied for at the time and they needed me to be active at the school or doing some type of afterschool programming ahhhh………… or something in that regards ummmm sss and I……. I.. had a friends that were already apart of Upward Bound that said it would be a good idea to come and join (sighs) so I came in, fill out application and ahhhhhh……… come and what it turn out to be is that I I got that job offered, turn it down, but I really got involved with Upward Bound, and I love the program, soooo, that’s what allow me to be a little bit more involved ummm with the program later on.

Ok. Dooo you recall the first time you met Ms. James?

Oh man, she was a joy to meet. Honestly, just a…… a…… loveable person, ahhhhh……. she’s caring, ummmmmm and she shows it. Soooo when we walk up to the door we told
her what we were doing. Ummm……. Me and my friend came in at the same time and…….. and……. at the time she was really intrigued or eager to get us to join as well just because ummm it ahhhh………… diversified the program in a way as well ahhhhh…….. I guess it was the first time that they had anyone other than someone all……. all……. African American ummmm people there. So ummmm ahhhh and ummmm again, I just love the program as a whole she was very welcoming as as all the other staff. Ummm……. And, very helpful that transition because me and my friend had to go through ummmmmm both of our parents ummm we’re the only one is to take us after school in this area and things like that. Sooooo, they helped us through a lot.

OK. Describe your experiences in being in the Upward Bound program under this director?

Ok….Well…. Under Mrs. James it was a great learning experience. Ummm……. She taught me how to be an… adults. She taught me to be more determined. And….ummmm…. One of the key things that I learned from her that I….. I……. needed to be responsible for whatever actions and…. and……… things like that that ummm ummmm whatever actions that I took ummm so going through the 2, 3 years that I did in the program, one of the things ummm I think that I learned the most was to be punctual and that something ummm that I learned hard about and then learning ummmm studying skills, I was going through DPS honors (inaudible) and had struggles and with……. with…. grade, she’ll tell you that….I use to skip classes and still end up with 4.0s and things like that. Just… just… because, ummmmmm and… and… by no means, did I did I skip on purpose I…….. I……. would walk into classes and go do whatever work I had to do. And, tell the teacher leave it, 10 to 15 minutes was all it took me just because Upward Bound get me far ahead a little bit and then I come from classes, stay in the Upward Bound room and study for the ACT and things like that. Sooo, I wasn’t skipping in a bad way it still to help me out in whatever sense. Ummmm so I did that ummmm it…. it….. ahh…. ahh…. Upward Bound just serve as a stepping stone for me to go to college. Because it help me prepare for college, prepare for the classes that I’m gonna take, prepare the people that I’m going to meet and ummm just prepare to be more of an individual and more independent.

OK. Describe the opportunities that you had to interact with the director personally….ahhhh can you describe a few of those times when you had to one on one trying to work…..

Directly, interacting with her?

Exactly.

There……. There……. was a few times, going back to being punctual. Ummmmm……….. When we were at Midwestern University for that summer it was really my first time that I got to be alone and away from my family. And, I had to do a lot, she…… she……. even had to talk to my parents (sigh) ummm……. into letting me go ummmm so when I did go there I ummmm ssss……. I was free (slight laugh). So ahhhhh……….. I was I was going crazy letting….. letting……. my childish way getting
into the way what was important sometimes which was to get all the knowledge and mentoring that I can ahhhh from Ms. James, Caleb, some the other staff that were here. (Sighs) I had a few interactions with ummm…….. with Ms. James about ummm my ACT…… ACT score and how I can improve on ahhhh what I already gotten. Because as a…….. as a…… fr… fr…. freshman, at the end of my freshman year I did take the ACT and I did good on it, not great, but I did good on it and ummm…… she was surprised at the score that I got so ahh…….. she was expecting me to do that ummm…… but they everyone gained confidence in me af…. after that because I did pretty well to be a freshman to get the score that I did get. So I talk with her about that, about ahh……. focusing on the ACT about how I wanted a higher score. Another thing I always sat down and spoke with her about getting ummmm…… scholarships, applying for scholarships and things like that. I took down a lot of notes she gave me and a lot of advice she gave me as well to go on Fastweb and apply for all of these different scholarships that I ended up getting ummmm…… $20,000 scholarship from Dell, ummm…… I got ummmm…..

(Noise)

$5,000 ahhhh………. Walmart, I got one from Coke. So ummm I honestly took her advice to heart and it help me a lot because ummm knowing how college is I got money at the end of the semester because I had so much money going into college.

Ummmmm……. How did the director organize the program during your time in the project? Such as how was tutorials set up, or a Saturday program, if you had it then, how was that set up….. field trips and staff….. how was the staff set up?

Ahhhh………… oh man, ahhh………… you know what, ahh…… since I left Upward Bound I’ve been doing my own tutoring program, ahhh…. that I… I…… ahhh…… in in the community that I’m at Teno Padre (sp?). I honestly have been stealing some of Ms. James organizational skills and things like that I could use……

So you kind of modeled your program after her….

Because it was organize so well. Honestly, she does a great job I haven’t met anyone that had can you know what I mean do some of things that she’ done with keeping the staff in line, keeping up with students in line everybody who knew Ms. James needs to straighten up, you know what I mean (slight laughter). Sooo it…… it…… was something like that, but the things is she was always nice about it…… it……. wasn’t one of those ummm type of bossy leaders, she was more….. more………. of a more of an actual leader who was hands on with the students, hands on with the staff. She got her hands dirty when she needed to. And, I love that about her. Ummmm and that that how always students need to be (inaudible). You can’t just them what they need you….. you….. show them be active with them build them what they need to and she was very much like that. (sigh) Just simple tutoring hours organize after school. Ummmm I usually stay 1 or 2 days just to help other students out or just to finish up homework. But way it was set up there was always tutors there ummmm one set up for math, one for writing, one for English what have you and computers available as well if you want or needed the computer for anything. So whichever subject you needed help with you go see that specific tutor.
Ummmm Do you recall the days of the week you had tutoring? Ummmm……..
How…… how…… was it…..

Thinking back 6 or 7 years

Yeah

Ummmm…… (sighs) if I’m correct it was like Mondays and Thursdays. I know
Thursdays for sure it was one of the days I had I had I use to stay afterschool.

So it was…… So you had the opportunity to go twice a week?

It was two or three times ahhhhhh………. I forget how many days they were opened. I
think they were only closed like 1 or 2 days so they so they were open 3 or 4 days if
I remember correctly. I I just didn’t ummmm ummmm………. feel the need to come
every day. I had ride issues because I did stay far away as well ahhhhhh………. If I had the
chance I would stay ummm everyday soooo.

You did have to come quite a distance to go. Ok.

Yeah I came from Sterling Heights now, but I lived all the way on ummm (Davidset)
sooo I mean it’s not a huge drive, but considering high school days it was pretty far.

Ok Ummmm. You kind of touched upon it little a bit and maybe you can share some
more ummm…. How would you describe your director’s leadership style in the program?

Ahhh yeah just just going back to what I said before. I ahhh ahh absolutely blessed to be
led by someone like Ms James. She knew exactly what to say at the right time. She knew
exactly what to do. And. in terms of diversity when ummm………… there were times
where students weren’t doing well. And I went to Ms James and told her, “Hey listen, it’s
not…. it’s not…. me that, it’s not my fault that everyone else is struggling with the work
that this teachers are giving them.” and things like that. And, she just flat out told me,
“Hey, listen you’re doing great, I understand. But we want everyone to work as a team
here. So, why aren’t you helping everyone else?” And, I took that to heart ummmm,……,
that night we were at the computer lab. And, we were missing out on our fun activities
because everyone was behind in their studies, everyone ummmm….. not everyone, but
most of the kids were behind in their studies and things like that. Soooo, and, I’m the type
of guy, I wanted to get my work done as fast as I can. I wanna spend as much free time as
I can playing basketball, playing whatever, any type of group activity. Sooo (sigh), that
night we were at the library at Upward Bound, and I remember the building too.
Ummmm so we were there I finished up my work and literally went around one person at
(school bell sounds) a time and help everyone that needed help ummmm just so, just so,
we can finish, go out there and play and things like that. Sooo it……. It………. was just,
that was just how she was. She would get her hands dirty when she needed to and she just
knew what to say. (Sigh) ahhhh no matter what situation you’re right, she just knew what
to say to get you ummmm to be motivated, to be determined, ummm taa……. ummm in a
way give you that extra push ummm mentally, physically or…. or………. or….. what have
you. She was great at it.
Ummmm……. What benefits have you and your peers gained from being in this program?

Ahhh Man so many, so many benefits. Ummm I…… I……… wreaked havoc of the benefits I think. Ummmm……. wha…….. one of the things is gaining on the mentorship that I that I did get from ummm………. from Ms. James, from Caleb Stephens so….. so……… many names that I can go through but ahhhh I think she put a great group of guys together and ladies together for this staff that we could always ummm speak with and ummm they were doing well in school, they were doing well with life in general. So umm so ahhhh I think she did she did a great job in hiring the right people if she is in charge and I believe she was. (Sigh) And ummm that helped us because ummm well we are being mentor by these people. So they knew what to tell us because they went through the experience and things like that. So, they in turn ummm in turn help us get to, well most of us where we are today, honestly.

Ok. Ummmm……. Anything else that you would like to add?

About Ms. James or the program in general?

Ms. James.

Clo ….Well, ummm……. (sigh) I mean, you know, when whenever I do ummmmm…… interviews of other people and things like that, I would always try to think of one negative that anyone can improve on. And, and as I’m sitting here and thinking now I wouldn’t change Ms. James at all. I… I……… just wanna……. she she’s a loving caring ahhh……. human being in general, I just of her, you know what I mean? So she’s care about everyone that walks through those door, she gonna help everyone equally ummmm no matter what, no matter what your situation is. And, she will go that extra step to help you succeed.

Alright. It is now 11:18, that will conclude the interview. Ahhhh I would like to thank graduate student A for coming in today and taking part in this interview. Ahhhh as I go through this process I may have to come back just ta…… clarify anything that you said,

Ok.

If there……. if there……. is any ahhh……. misunderstandings or just clarifications on anything. So, would you be willing to do that if that ………

Yeah.

….arises?

Well you…

I just get in contact with Ms. James if that comes up.

Perfect.
But again I want to thank you (laughter).

No problem.
Appendix J

Graduate Student B

Ok, I am now with Graduate Student B (papers shuffling) it is March 7, 2014. It is about to be 11:23AM. Ummmm……. We are about to ahh…. begin our interview. Umm……. As I mentioned earlier if there is a question that you are not comfortable with let me know and we can pass that question up and ummm it won’t be any issues just let me know ummm ahhh I’ll ask you a series of questions just try to ask….. answer them as best as you can. Ummmm……. Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

No there’s no questions.

Ok ummm first question is, when did you join the program or what were your years in the program?

As a student my years in the program were from 99–2000 to 2003.

Ok Ummmmm…………. What made you join the program or what led you to joining the program?

Ummmm………… From my memory I think it was my mom she was real involved with the school. So anything to help me ummmm…….. build my academics up she wanted me to join. So she had got me into the program?

Ummm…… Do you recall when you first met Ms. James?

Ummm………… Yes. It was a meeting ummm that we had to like basically umm………… informational to tell us about the program. Sooo, right there.

OK. Ummmm………… Could you describe your experiences in being in the Upward Bound program under this director?

Ummm………… it was a great experience. I think, coming from ummm basically my demographics, the neighborhood, ummmmm………… based off the income it was a great experience. I think, we wouldn’t of ummmmm…….. as far as the students in the neighborhood be able to experience things like that, out of town trips, ummm………. experience living on a (quick sigh) college campus for six weeks, ummm……. things like that. So, I think it was a great experience. A very eye opening for like people that’s coming from that parents never graduating from high school. So that was a good experience.

Ahhhhh…….. could you describe the opportunities that you had to interact with the director while you was in the program?

Ummm…….. I had a lot of opportunities ummm…….. to inter interact with Ms. James. She was ahhhh…….. I……. I……. feel like an extra parent inside the school. She kept me on task with my schoolwork ummmmm…….. like throughout or through the program,
she would check us, check up on us ummmm…….. with report cards so ummmm…….. it was a good experience ummmm…….. interacting with her because I felt like I needed the extra help in school and she was there to provide it.

Ummmm…….. How did the director organize the program during your time in the project? Ah So, how was tutorials set up or Saturday programming set up, field trips….How was that set up at during your time?

Ummmm, from my memory it’s been…….. I wanna say about 10 plus years. So, ummmm…….. we had tutoring, I believe Monday-Thursday and……. ummm…… usually after school time sooo it ran probably an hour or to two hours 3 3 to5:00, I believe. And, they had tutors for each subject ummmm…….. at a table and we would work on our work. And, if we needed help we go to the tutor. And, during the summer program ummmm……. I’m not sure what time we ahh……. actually met up, but we had tutoring time for ummm….. the courses we was taking during the summer. And we had ummm…….. computer time set up for us.

Ummmm…….. Do you recall field trips, how was or how was the staff set up. What…Ms. James, she was the director; did she have an administrative assistant or counselor?

Yes. Ummmm She had an assistant Ms. Ms. Brady (Edwards) ummmm (smacks teeth) as far as the staff ummm……. ahhh……. it was mainly them two ummm……. Ms. James and Ms. Brady. And the tutoring staff that came ummm…….. during the tutoring time. And during the summer we had, we had mentors evening and daytime mentors. Umm…….. the daytime mentors basically escorted us from class back to our rooms so much. Ummmm……. evening mentors planned events for ummm us after we get out of class so we have different games, different ummmm….. ed…. educational projects, umm……. we we’ll go to the rec center, different events that they set up for us.

Ummmm…….. How would you describe your director’s leadership style in the program?

Ummmm…….. I think it was more (pause) she……. she……. basically ummmm (pause) did I want to say, she cater to each person in need. So, if you was that person that needed that extra push she’ll be on all of the time. But if she felt like you worked better by yourself she just check in on you. So, she adapted to the students ahhh…. I think that was a good thing. But certain…… certain…… students, me myself sometimes ahh….. slacked off, ahh……. playing around in class she’d pull us to the side. And, le….. let us……. let us know that we need to get back on task.

Ahhhh……. What benefits have you and your peers gained being in this program? What benefits you’ve seen that you gained or your friends have gained?

Ummmm…….. I think I benefitted a lot. Umm just from being in the program. Ummmm…….. just from getting the knowledge from different workshops, different ummm…….. events. And, currently I’m working ummm….. for an after school program. So basically I took I took everything I learned as a student and as an employee of the Upward Bound program ummmm……. and basically incorporated into what I do now. So, I gained a lot as far as the information, I don’t think me, ummm…….. if I
wasn’t in this program I think my life probably be a lot different as far as, me, in knowing what to do with myself as far as out of school and planning for higher education because…..if it wasn’t for the program, like any…. Any…… anybody ummm…… in the school as really didn’t give us that information even the counselor I was expose to. They didn’t really ummm inform us on certain things. But Ms. James and the Upward Bound program they took time out like ACT prep ummmmmm…….. SAT, college application, and a Financial Aid ummm workshops and things like that. So, I… I….. I…… gained Personally, I gained a lot. Fromm ummmmm I know a couple of other of ummm…… my classmates gained…. gained…. a lot. Just ahh…… far as all of the information that was given to us. From the field trips ummm went to like different places we got ummmmmm…… went to plantations, we ummm…… to ummmmmm…… Tuskegee Airmen, Tuskegee College. So, it was a lot of information that that I took in and ummm learned from.

So you umm….. was a student in the program and you also worked for the program? For some time so what did you what…..

I was an Evening Mentor

Evening Mentor?

Yes, so, ummm…….. during the summer program. It was 6 weeks when I was a student, but they cut down on the weeks. So ummmmm…… I think it was 4 or 5. Ummm…… We ummm…… basically worked, planned events for ummm…… the students. And, I worked from 2005 to 2….. 2007. So, that was 3 years as an ummm evening mentor and as a tutor throughout the school year.

Ok. Umm…….. Is there anything else that you would like to add about Ms. James and…..

Ummmm…. I’m very I’m grateful for Ms. James like as far as her impact that she had on me as a teenager and as a young adult. Ummm…… I feel like ummmm…… she was a good ummm…… advisor. Ummm…… She let me know when I was stressing about school like as far as finishing on time and things like that ummm she let me know like, “Hey, I went through the same thing.” It took me time to ahh….. actually finish school. So, I’m grateful for ummm…… her impact on me.

Alright. Ummm…… this will conclude the interview. It is now 11:32 ummmmmm……. with graduate student B. Ummm…… If throughout the process if there maybe ahhh…… chance I have to clarify something you said or just ahhh…… uhhhh….. ask something would you be willing to do that down the road?

Why Yes. Yes.

I will contact Ms. James if that occurs. Umm, Again, I want to thank you for taking the time out to do this interview. I really appreciate it.

No problem. No problem.
Alright. Thank you.
Appendix K

Graduate Student C

Ok today is March 19th, it is approximately 1:43PM. I am about to interview Graduate Student C. I just want to thank you for taking part in this interview. Ahhhh interview will be approximately 10–15 minutes And, I will begin by asking you….. the first question is Where are you as far as your education today?

Ummmm I’m doing my Master’s program at Midwestern University in XXXXXX, Michigan.

Me: In Mount Pleasant, Michigan.
And this is my first year

Me: Ok, and ok ummmmmmm When did you join Upward Bound?

Ummm, I know it was a year after it started at my school. I believe it was like 2000?

Ahhh ok ahhh annnnd were you….how long were you in the program?

From 10th to 12th grade so 3 years.
3 years ok. Do you recall when you first met Ms. James?

Wellllllll, I believe so.

Me: Aahhhhh could you..

She’s not someone you could forget.

(Laughter from both)

Ok, could you describe that first meeting? If you can remember.

Ummmmmm , well I know I didn’t want to be in the program. My mom wanted me to be in the program. It was…..I think she just didn’t want me to get into any trouble. She wanted me in different programs and stuff like that. Ummmmmmm, but I know a lot of my friends was in the program. So that is how I heard about it. (Clears throat)And, so, I kind of met Ms. James before my mom even brought me to the program.

Ok

But ummm She always encouraging and tol.. and telling me that I needed to be a part of the program. To take advantage of all the different opportunities.

Ok
But ahhhhh, she’s a very strong willed woman. She knows what she want. (laughs) Very determined…., and ummmmm I I I kind of liked her in the beginning because she spoke from experience a lot. You know.

Alright

And, ummm, she’s very professional and down to earth. So, but, as far as the exact meeting when I first got into the program. I don’t know if I remember that.

Ok ahhhhhh describe your experiences in being in the Upward Bound, Upward Bound program under this ahhh director?

Ummmmm, (clears throat) My experiences, you know, everybody has their ups and downs. Like, during that time, I wa… I was struggling a lot. Not just with school, but just being a typical teenager.

Me: Ummhmmm

And, I was dealing with a lot of things at home as well. So, honestly, I was I I started off as one of her problem kids (laughs).

Ok

If that makes sense.

Ummm hmmm, ummmm hmmm

But ummmmm she she stayed on me. But, she wouldn’t let me quit. She wouldn’t let me go down a different path. Ummmmm she always, ahh she saw me doing different things that I probably shouldn’t have been doing. She would pull me aside and just tell me about myself and but she had a……she was really good at putting me in check as far if she saw me going off a path. You know, putting me back on the right path. And, she was kind of close with my mom. So, she made, she made sure she made good relationships with the parents.

Ok

Sooo, you know how if I’m at school and I’m doing something that I’m not supposed to be doing

Ahhhh haaa

She would say, “I’mma tell your mom, you hear?” (Laughter)

Ok

You know, but ummmmm, I, overall I I believe it was an awesome experience . Ummmm,(clears throat) I know while in the program, I didn’t take advantage of all of the opportunities that I should have taken advantage of. Like, make sure I was on top on the
scholarships and stuff like that. But, now that I think back, you know, I wish would have listened right away.

Ok, alright, ummmmm, Describe the opportunities that you had to interact with the director? So one on one, you could think of any ummmmm one on one interactions with her.

Ummmm one on one talks? She, she know how to pep talk with me……. (clears throat) because of, you know ummm my attitude. And, when I was in the 11th grade my mom got ill. So I was really having a hard time with that and even when my mom passed away , you know, she was always there. Like, even when I graduated from high school, she always made sure that she could stay in contact with me. You know, she never lost that contact. So I had a lot of one on one conversations with her. Which helped a lot (clears throat). A lot! (laughter).

So basically, so basically she was almost like family to you? Such as

Oh yeah

She was someone you could lean on and talk to at anytime.

Ummmmhhmmmmm definitely family.

Ok ummmmm, How did the director organize the program during your time in the project? Soooo ahhh, so how was tutorials set up, Saturday program, field trips, college tours, ahhh summer trip?

Very well organize. (Laughter)

Ok

Because its something like, now that I look back at…. if something ummmmmm (clears throat) fell through she always had like a back-up plan. So being a student you never really know that something didn’t go right. And, now that I’m like a staff in the summer program.

Laughter

I see that she always have those…

Ahhhh

Back-up plans (slight laugh and clears throat) So, she, she’s very, very well organize.

Ummmmmm what about…..

She’s very professional.

What about the college tours, did any of that those tours sti… stick out to you?
Yes.

Could you exp…..

Ummmmmm like do you want me to name some?

Yeah ahhhh yeah I mean why did they stick out to you? You said ahhh.

Ummmmmm

So which one in particular sticks out to you and why?

Well, when I was a student in the program I believe Midwestern University stuck out to me the most…it wasn’t too far from home and it wasn’t too close from home. (clears throat) And then, I was coming up for the ummmmm summer program. I already knew the campus. I already made a lot of connections. I even had a job ummmmm waiting on me. So ummmmm I guess I would say MU stuck out to me.

And that what led you

In that aspect

to attend the school later and go to the school later on.

Ummmhm

Ok. Ummmmmmm, How would you describe your director’s leadership style in the program?

Ummmmmmmmm (Pause) leadership style. Like I said earlier very strong willed. She knows what she wants(clears throat). Ummmmmm, She’s not afraid to correct you (laughs). Ummmmmm, she’s very good at encouraging too. She was determined ahhh she’s not just a leader that just leads and say alright now go home. (Clears throat). But, she, she makes things personal. Well not personal like, you know, she’s down to earth. She speaks from experience and stuff like that.

So she was easy ahhhhh easy to approach?

Oh yes. Very easy to approach.

Ok ahhhhhhh, anything else that you would like to add?

Ummmmmm, I could say that this program in a way saved my life. (laughs)

And could you…. 

I know before the pro….huh?

No, I said could you go on to explain that.
I know before the program, honestly, I could not see pass my neighborhood. I didn’t know many opportunities like college ahh because ahh I’m the first in my family to go. And, (Clears throat) just like with my family they were, you know, very negative toward me. They always told me that ummmm…. I would never be anything at… in life. And, just different things like that. So, and your family, your older siblings and you believe them. Well, you know, I believe them for so long. Then you have someone like Ms. James who told me different. You know, and, like I said, I couldn’t see past my neighborhood and because of that encouragement, and, you know, just everything that the program has done for me, like I’ve started to help in the world now. And, I I know there’s so many more opportunities out there for me.

Alright. Ummmm

(Something inaudible from student)

Ahhhh, did you have something else to say?

No.

Ok.

I’m just (inaudible then laughter).

Ok. The next question is, What benefits, you kind of touched on some of this already, but what benefits have you and your peers gained being in this program under ahhhh Ms. James?

Benefits. Ahhh….college of course is one of them (Laughs). Ummmmmm (clears throat) Welllllll, I don’t know how to explain that, but I know ahhhhhh, college has opened a lot of different opportunities for me.

Ummmmm

Even just flattered to allow me to come back and be a staff in the summer program. Ummmm, I can be that one to encourage the student, you know. Because I know exactly, a lot of the things that they that they go through as teenagers. And, just the encouragement that they need and just telling them that, you know, giving up won’t get you anywhere, but hard work will (Clears throat).

Ummmmm

And just being that mentor, you know cause (laughs) like see, like I told you that ummmmm that I was one of her problem students in the beginning

Yes, Yes.

But ummmmm, yes just ummm, just, ummm I can speak from my own experience like she to me and just let them know hey I used to, I used to be that way (clears throat).
But Just sort of give them an example of how they can turn things around. I I see that as a good opportunity

To be that voice

Ok

Into their lives.

Ok. Is there anything else that you would like to add before we conclude?

(sighs) ummmmmmm I don’t… think so.

Ok. Ummmmmm We are ending the interview. And, I want a once again thank you ummmmmmm graduate student B for taking part in this interview. Ummmmmm Once is, this interview is transcribed I will email you a copy just to have you go over it. Just to make sure everything is correct or if you need to add anything later on. Ummmm would that be ok?

Yes. That’s fine.

Ok. Ummm Once again, I want to thank you and I will, am stopping the tape.
Appendix L

College Administrator

Ok, we’re going to get started. Ok. Ahhh today is April 16th, 2014. It is approximately 2:20PM. I am with ahhhhhh the college administrator of this university.

Ummmmm, Our first question is, How long have you been at your university?

Ummhmmm, I have been at this institution for approximately 16 years.

Ok. Ummmm how long have you been in your current position?

My current position is an interim position. I have been in it ummmmm this ahh I’ve been in it actually two to three times. Ummmm, this is…..though I’ve been in the position approximately two years.

Two years. Ok. Ummmm, how long have you been involved with the Upward Bound program?

I have worked side by side with the director of the Upward Bound program for approximately, well the 16 years I have been here. Ummmm, and then most recently in my interim capacity I have worked directly with the Upward Bound as supervising it or just kind of managing the program in the past two…. 1 and half, 2 years.

So you’ve been with the program since the very beginning.

I have. However, I was in a different office. Ummm, it was a very lateral position to the one the director of Upward Bound is in. I was in a different office and while I was familiar with the program there wasn’t much hands on work that I did with it other than just supporting it, providing students for tours, that sort of thing.

Ok. Ummmm, what does Upward Bound mean to your university?

Well, to our university Upward Bound means an opportunity to give students, it’s an opportunity for us to give students an opportunity to ahhhh further their education, their higher education. Not necessarily at Midland University, although, we would love for them to come to MU. Not necessarily here, but in higher education altogether. So, we support the students by providing resources for them so that they can become acclimated to higher education, prepared for high education and provide those same resources to their parents or guardians.

Ok, ummmm, what, what are your experiences in working with the Upward Bound’s director?

The director, specifically?

Yes.
Or the director as in the program (laughter)?

The director, specifically.

Well, specifically, she and I have known one or another for about the 15 or 16 years that I have been here. We both started in a different field in higher education. Both of us worked in the admission’s office. That is how we met, ……of, of different universities. So, we met one another while traveling on the road. We developed a strong friendship, a great working relationship and she eventually ended up applying for a position at the university where I’ve always been. Ummmm, our working great…. working relationship just carried over into the ahhh unit that she is now a part of. And, we were a part of together. That relationship just rolled over then. Ummmm, and we have a close working relationship and if she needs something done on campus because she’s not located on campus then I can assist her with that. Kind of provide her that support for her that up here ummm administratively and just collaterally that she does not have.

Ok, ummmm, how do you explain the evolution of the Upward Bound program throughout the changing political environment? From 15, 16 years ago when the program started to now with, you know, you probably heard, the thing that has gone on in D.C. and all the changes H….How

Well

How do you go, how do you explain that evolution?

Well, I’m not very well versed in the thing that is happening in D.C. and the cause and effect that it has on the Upward Bound program. Primarily, what I have realized is that some of the thing that are taken place in D.C. ummmm the ummmm mandates that are provided to TRiO programs and Upward Bound programs ummmm in particular that they service and serve more students. Of course that is great, but when you’re servicing and serving more students with less money and the same money that you have that can be a little difficult for a program to do. So, they’re trying to make these wonderful, great things happened without the necessary resource from the government that is needed. So, I have seen the budget of the Upward Bound program start to ummmm (pause), start to disappear.

Ummhmmmm.

That is not the word I was looking for, but it ummm defines exactly what I’m saying, trying to say. Start to disappear, a little better, dwindle down.

Ahhh yeah

And, so the director and ummmm the staff of the Upward Bound program has had to yet to be very creative and building partnerships and relationships within the community and with other organizations in order to supplement that funding and that funding that disappeared due to cuts within the Upward Bound budget.
Ok. Ummmm, how do you describe the director’s leadership style?

Phenomenal. Absolutely phenomenal. She is a hands on person. She is a trans ummm, excuse me, I was going to say transitional leader. Ummmm, she is one of those types of leaders that really gives people the opportunity to develop their skills, very patient, develop their skills, ummmm, and help them become the leaders that they are desiring to be. She is also (pause) very proud of her program and honored to work with the students that she works with ummmmm sooooo ……..She also can be very direct at times, which is great, but not in a rude or mean way. She just wants to make sure the program is taken, with well taken care of. And, the students are are well taken care of as well.

Ok. What have been the challenges at your institution as it relates to the UB program? You kind of touched on it a little earlier.

Yeah, I think the main challenges that has been a part of ummm, ummm, this Upward Bound program is the match ummm partnerships. Not in a, and when I say partnerships I don’t mean necessarily its hard, people don’t want to work with students because they do. But it’s the institutional commitment that….. institutional financial commitment to either make this program an institutional responsibility place some type of allocation into ummmm the line or the budget for this program. Ummmm, take real strong ownership of the program and taking on that financial responsibility that’s been the biggest, the biggest challenge for the program.

What are the benefits the students receive in being a participant in the program?

You know these young, you students are very fortunate to be a part of this program. I think back to the time when I was in high school, when I was getting ready to come to college and just how I could have as well benefitted from some of the things, the resources they’re providing, provided to them. The students get the opportunity to have ummm resources such as ACT and SAT prep workshops. They get ummm financial aid experience information. Their parents get the same type of information in private parent workshop as well. The students have the opportunity to travel to various colleges and universities to explore the different type of colleges and universities. Not only within the state of Michigan but without the, but with…..out of the state of Michigan as well. Ummmm, so it’s in the actual country a certain region, I know each year they attempt to take a college tour and explore the different types of universities from TWIs, Traditional White Institutions or Predominantly White Institutions to HBCUs or Hispanic Serving Institutions, community colleges, etc. So, they’re so many resources, they get resources and information on public speaking. How to develop leadership skills, ummmmm, just a number of things.

Ok. Ummmm, how does the institution support the director in terms of budget, facilities in assisting program to meet their objectives?

Well it’s, it’s pretty, ummmmm, easy for the institution, excuse me, pretty easy for the program to have access to, ummmmm, facilities and that sort because they are a part of the university’s community there, part of the university ahhhhh diversity unit. So they have
access to the same things that any other program on campus will have access to. As with any other program on campus they also are charged (slight laugh) just like any other program on campus. That can be difficult at times because of their budget being not as large as they would like. Sometimes those costs and those expenses can eat up their budget. And so we have to have some very strategic partners that in partnering that take place for the program, so that those costs and those expenses are not so heavy on the budget.

Ok. Ummmm, my last question is ahhhhhh what do you hope to see ahhhh ahhhh the Upward Bound program at your institution, what do you hope to see in its future?

Well, I would love to see the institution take on the responsibility of locating a place so that regular Upward Bound programs locating in a few high schools down in the Detroit area, I would love to see the institution provide a stand-alone building, or a stand-alone space for our Upward Bound program. Ummmm, So that if there are problems within this public school system and schools are shut down as they have been before our staff does not have to move. I would also like to see more of a financial ummmm, fiscal responsibility place on our institution to support the upward Bound program. We, ummmm, talk about diversity and diversity efforts and I would love to have that commitment not to just talked about, but also have some backbone to that as well.

Ok, ummmmm, is there anything else you would like to add about the director or the program itself?

We have been very fortunate to have a wonderful director of the program. Ummm, And, under her leadership the program has done some phenomenal, amazing things. So, I’m really proud of her and the program and the students that have participated. So, thank you so much for, for, offering the opportunity to speak to her.

Alright, thank you!

You’re welcome. I have your research subject informed consent

Yes

form in front of me

Yes

And, so I’m just going to sign

Ummhmmm. And

ok

ahhh, you can fax it back or email it to me.

Does Lisa (her administrative assistant) have your fax number?
Yes
Oh, yeah I see it, XXX-XXX-XXXX.
Correct
Ok!
Alright
I will sign and get that to you in just a moment.
Thank you for this interview, thank you.
You’re welcome. Thank you for your patience. Take care.
Appendix M

Director Interview

Ok. Today is April 28th, 2014. Ahhhhhh 10 after 9AM. I’m interviewing the director of the Upward Bound program. Ahhhh, I just want to say thank you for taking part in this interview this morning. And, my first question to you is, how long have you been at your institution?

Ahhhh, 15 years. It will, it will be 15 years in January.

January. OK. Ahhhhh, how long have you been in this Upward Bound program?

15 years.

15 years. So you been at…at the institution and the same, the same job area, the same…..

Yeah.

Ok. Ummmm, please talk to me about the evolution of the program from when you started until now?

Well, when I first started to working with the program, I had not ummm, work for ahhhh, an Upward Bound program. I was actually a grad advisor in my graduate program for ahhh Student Support Services program at Michigan --------, but had no idea that it was ahhh a TRiO Program until I actually started working for Upward Bound.

OK.

So, ummmmm, when I came into the program I was new ahhhhh, basically, had been hired, you know, they handed me the grant that they had written, ahhhh, and said basically, make it happen.. My boss at the time was ahhh director for the institutional diversity at MU and he told me just don’t burn the place down and that was pretty much it. So it was really up to me to, you know, redo the grant to find out, you know how to get things implemented that were on paper. Ummmm, how to work within the high schools because one of the things that is unique about our program is that Midwestern University is in __________. And the two target schools they wrote for were in Detroit. And, so I’m a MU employee but I work inside two Detroit public high schools, but at the time one Detroit public high school. And, you know, I had never done this before, so it was really up to me and, and, and then my, my team once I built it to really try to get the program up and running. And, so, I had no idea about regulations. I had no idea about policies, you know, at the school policies, ahhh, for the university as well as regulations with the Department of Ed. which you could, can and can’t do. There are some things that you can do, you know, at the university that you can do and the high school and vice versa. So, there are also things that were allowable in the grant, but the university had a different policy. So, there was really trying to navigate through all of those pieces and trying to figure out how to recruit students, get staff, build trust, you know, in the high schools, because it’s very different from university community. The university community, you know they have office hours and cell phones and, and, and office phones and office help
and carpet and, you know, locked doors. My office was a classroom that had old papers in it from the 1970s.

Alright (slight laughter)

So, literally, I, I had to come in and really build, you know, everything from the ground up. The infrastructure of the program, you know, the program itself and then all of the other stakeholders that I needed to have buy in to help me move the program forward. So, you know, I came into the building and, and, and needed, you know, to use the phone and people were looking at me like, “Well, who, who are you?” “Who do you work for?” and so I quickly found that I had to build allies in the building, so that I can get what I needed. Ummmm, so, the program has since, you know, evolved….I had, you know, wonderful staff on my ahhh, in the program that have, you know, come into the program have built their education and their expertise, have gone on to do other things. Ummmm, so, it’s definitely have grown from one staff member and no students to having a few students really wanting to take part, but not really knowing what it was all about or the commitment level that was needed, you know, to be a part of the program to, you know, where it is now. We served over, you know, 500 students that have come through our program proper in terms of documented students and then all of the other, you know, fill outs from that, students who, you know, weren’t able to be a part in our program, but because we are a stable in that building, people know about us, students know that if they can’t get help from a counselor in the building that they can come down to our office and stop by and Upward Bound will help them.

Ok.

So….

Ok. Alright. Ummmm., what are the major challenges you have faced as a director of the Upward Bound Program in providing services to students?

You know, I think a couple of the ahh, a couple of major challenges has been not being on the university’s campus. Which means that we are, we are out of sight and we are out of mind. So, people don’t see our day to day interactions with students at the university. They, they don’t see ummm, what goes on in the, in the, in the urban school district in terms of the politics of that, in terms of what actually happens in the building from day to day. So, while somebody on campus may want me to respond to an email right away, we may have a fire drill or there may be a fight or I might have a parent that walks in that whose student just got put out of school or some major event that happened right in the building that the university doesn’t, they don’t know about nor…. not that they care about it, but they don’t, they don’t have to worry about it because it doesn’t impact their day to day.

Right.

So, that has been a challenge to help people on campus understand the culture and the climate that the program works in every day. Yet, we are a MU program …..when people come to… into our office they ask questions about MU. They don’t automatically ask questions about Upward Bound. They see our door, they see our signs they think we’re
Midwestern, but they automatically think well I can get information about Midwestern. Well, I’m not an admission person, although, I worked in admissions for a number of years. So, I know, you know, the process, but, you know, people see our office and they see MU. Which means that we represent MU even when we don’t want to. When we just want to do Upward Bound, we can’t just do Upward Bound, we have to do MU and represent MU. So, that’s one challenge and then I mentioned the other one about, you know, just navigating through all of the policies and the protocol between the Department of Ed., you know, the University’s campus, their protocol and then what happens and what is predominant and immediate and that is what goes on in that building day to day.

OK. Ummmmm,

Wha

Please talk to to…..ahhhh, did you have something else to add?

Well, you know one other thing is, is, is just parents.

Ummmmmm

Parents and students and the relationships that parents have with students or the lack of a relationship that parents have with students and try to get students to buy into and believe and this so called American Dream of Post-Secondary education and access when their day to day does not match.

Ummmm

The day to day ahhhh, what they say to the school doesn’t necessarily point them towards college, the preparation is not always there ahhhhhh, you know, the culture and climate is not always there. And, then of course parents, if they are low, you know, lower income, first generation, their perspective is not, that’s not their first mindset. Their first mindset is let me get my kids to school, let me go to work, let me pay my bills and everything else you talking about comes after that. Even though they, they say it’s, it is, you know, a priority…..how that translate into students being committed to their academic studies and committed to the things in the program, it doesn’t always translate, which is very frustrating.

Alright. Ummmmm, please talk to me about the continued existence of this program at your university and why the program is needed?

Ummmm, I, I start with why the program is needed. Ahhhhh, I think that the program is needed because we have too many num……too many students in the system who are not academically prepared for college, you know, getting prepared for college while they’re in high school. Nor is there anyone in the school that’s not a teacher that is pushing this. And, is pushing, you know, you need to go to class; you need to be, you know, you need to have good behavior. Ahh Everything you do in your day to day either push you one step closer to your goal of going to college or one step further away. Somebody needs to be in the buildings pushing that. The teachers have a huge responsibility for instruction. They got to stay on these markers, you know, for curriculum…..they got to be , you
know, Parents, they got to feed the kids, they got to help social life……they got a lot going on. And, so if programs can be in the building that come alongside the teacher and the administrator to help that, I don’t care if it’s Upward Bound, TRiO, Gear Up……whatever. If there’s a program that has that kind of model that can work with the administration and work with the teachers to be another stakeholder in that building then that program is needed. Unfortunately, our program cost a lot of money. You need people to provide services. You need good people to provide services. You don’t just need people that need a part-time job or whatever to just come in because everybody that wants that says that they want to help students…..they only want to help them when it’s fun and when it’s good. But when it’s hard and it’s tough, if parents are cussing you out and all the other stuff then people don’t really want to help. That’s been my experience. I think the university understands that the program is very, you know, cost heavy. The Department of Education knows and as already recognize that, you know, the, the, per student spending for Upward Bound is very high. But, when you talk about trying to put students on campus, trying to put them in, on buses to get them here and there, try to ask a few people, ask people to work their weekends……..that, that can’t be minimum wage. Because it’s taxing mentally, it’s taxing physically and then of course you got to have a solid program that addresses academics and socially and emotional. That is not cheap.

Ok, ahhh Do you believe you are meeting the needs of your student population today with the changes in budget and from the Department of… of Education?

Nope! I don’t. I don’t think so. I think we are doing our very best ummm to do that……making adjustment that what we offer to students and, you know……one thing I do think is that it has forced us to become a little more, to become more creative and savvy about how we offer services. But there are just still some things that you are not going to be able to control and that, you know, fringe benefits, and, and, and, and that, that kind of thing and then what you are actually paying people. You know, I know that there are a lot of people out here who need jobs but, you know, to ask somebody to come in in the middle of the day for four hours and you are only going to pay them X amount of money is that going to be worth, worth it for them…..for gas money. I mean just real talk, you know, you know, is it worth me paying somebody just to work for four or five, four hours when they can work another job some play else closer to home and work more hours as oppose to coming to me, you know, in the middle of the day. So, you know, I think that the changes in the budget has, you know, forced us to kind of scale back on what we do. We also been able to partner with other programs in the building, but then, you know, you get into duplication of service. So, you know, I think some , in some ways I know the department has had to make those changes, you know, in terms of finances, but I think, you know, as far as, you know, ask, being asked to take in students at a lower level, a lower academic level and then provide them with services in an after school format and on a Saturday format and be forced to make changes, wide spread changes, in an afterschool format on something that happened to the students 52 weeks of the year or however many school weeks is it in a year, now you’re asking for a miracle. And, and, and I have a problem with that. I don’t know what the answer is, but to base, you know, Prior Learning Experience (points older programs receive when they compete for new grants), or you know, those, those points that, you know they give us based on whether or
not students graduate from college when we have no control over that, I think it’s asinine. I understand they have to have a measure, but that’s not the one they need to have.

Ahhhhhh, how would you describe your leadership style?

(She laughs) I think my, my leadership style is, has evolved. I think when I first came in I was, you know, I had come out of admission background, I had come out of working in university housing, I was a hall director and so I saw, saw, students come into college and I saw them struggling and, you know, I was like man, you know, people just gotta know, you know, you just get people to know what they need to do then they’ll do it. Because, you know, that’s what they want to do then they will change. But, that’s not necessarily true and (laughs) you know, I think a lot of, you know, my interactions with students on, you know, how I was raised and the values that I had, you know, I was brought up with. No, you don’t talk to adults like that; No, you don’t do this and that’s how I kind of, I guess ahh… ahh, for the lack of a better word rule. And, (pause) it didn’t work. Because, I alienated a lot of students that I wanted to really help that I know that I could help, but I alienated them because I was so pissed off about what they weren’t doing and how could you squander this opportunity, you, you know, don’t you know what you’re going to face when you get out here? And, you know, maybe they know and maybe they don’t. And, so what I needed to do, or what I needed to change or what I have changed is simply to help build relationships with students and parents and provide information, provide guidance, provide a challenge when it’s needed, provide support when it’s needed and let that be it. Anything else outside of that I can’t make any student, any parent, any administrator, or any staff member do anything that they are not invested in doing.

Ok. Has the institution supported your program? If so, please explain.

Yeah, I think that the institution it has ummmm, supported the program as best as they know how. Ummmm, again with being out of sight and out of mind and not having us immediately before them they don’t necessarily see our needs, nor will we communicate what those needs are. They don’t understand the environment in which we are asking for that. So, something that maybe, you know, you know, completely, you know, like why do you need that, well, this is why we need it. We, we not going to be able to be in the building, you know, during a spring break because the school is closed. I understand that you want us to take vacation time, but I’ll work from home. And, you’re, and you’re going to have to be ok with that because I can’t leave the building because it’s a safety issue. But because you work three hours away you don’t understand the climate and the environment in which my office is located. So you don’t understand that me walking out of my building at 5:00 and the time changes and its dark outside and I can be robbed. So we end early. But, our poli…our policies or protocol will say, “No, you need to stay til 5.” Well, I don’t agree with that. So, the safety of myself, and my staff and my students simply comes before that. And, I think that university has……initially they didn’t understand that. They didn’t…….didn’t understand it and to no fault of their own……cause they’re not here. So, they have no frame of reference. Ahhhhhhh…..But I do think, you know, over the years that I have been able to be in this position and have been……they been hearing the same message and they seen the success of our program……so of course when you get wins, people want to get behind a winner and they want to support that. But, I think that has helped ummmm, but I certainly think that
there are other areas that the university is going to need to step up, you know, we, we spent this whole 15 years with me in this program with no administrative assistant. Just in this last grant cycle, I was able to fight for a part-time admin person. So, literally, I’ve been the administrative assistant and the director for the program for the last 14 years.

Hmmm

And that’s not good.

Ok. What measure have you taken to cope with new objectives set by the Department of Education?

(Laughter) Besides prayer, (laughs) and intercession, ummmmm, I, I think that we have tried to collaborate more with the administration in terms of ahhh testing documentation. That there are……….because of the building that we in unfortunately they do a lot of testing of the students. Ummmm, I think that, you know, we have overreliance on the validity of, ahhh, what they test, but, you know, that’s the climate out there, you know, assessment and evaluation, that’s the climate out there. They want to know. And, so, we…. we been able to get other information besides grades and ACT scores. We’ve been able to get other kinds of benchmark and mid……evaluations ahhhhhh of students and assessments of students by working with the administration in our building. Our school is very different ahhhh than a regular Detroit Public School it’s a shared governance school. So, there are a lot of partners in the building that are all unfortunately just data driven. So, you know, we been able to work with those, in terms of getting testing data of students, getting that assessment data and then being able to work with teachers and………. and being in the building. We’re in the building every day, so not only do we have access to that quantitative data, but we also have immediate access to students, and building relationships with students. And, so, you know, that has helped. We’ll see, you know, what it looks like this year performance report. We had a lot of students that, that left our building because our school closed last year. And, when students leave schools in Detroit, you can’t find them. But you can’t find no grades, you can’t find anything. You cannot find these students. So, we have a lot of students that left, ahhhhh, our building, they were put out, you know, suspended. Just, a lot of issues, in terms of the types of students because we are in a persistently low achieving school. We got a lot of different types of students in our building. Those students who are high achieving they’re in Upward Bound, Gear Up, Mid-Night Golf…..they’re in 6 or 7 programs, but give no time to none of them. So, we tried to find the student that needs us and then try to work with that student, but with that type of student comes a lot of social and emotional issues. So, you know, I, I just think that people that set objectives don’t necessarily work in the buildings or work in the areas where we serve…..So all of that other social and emotional stuff has no bearing, they think it has no bearing on academics but it does.

Ok. Ummmm, what measure have you taken to cope with budget changes?

One creative thing that we did this year because, you know, we needed tutors and we needed administrative help and just help in the building ummm we worked…..we wrote for an AmeriCorp umm, grant and received it and so we were able to, you know, the leverage the…that support in terms of having another human resource in the, in the
building and in the program. So that was one of the ways that we did that. …And, you know, we cut our, we cut our summer program, our bridge program for our seniors that is no longer in the mix. The juniors do a bridge program so that we can have more of an impact and have more of a …. when they come back their senior year because they experience summer, you know, taking a class at the college or the university. So, when they come back they kind of know, ok this what I need to do ahhhhh, and then we also only do a summer residential program for freshmen and sophomore and we only do a three week program there.

Ok. And, that’s cut down from the six weeks?

(Slight laughter) We still have six weeks

Ok

But not six weeks residential.

Ok, alright. Has programming and activities changed since you begin working with students? You kind of (laugh) alluded to that…

Ahhhhh, Definitely, ahhhhhh, has changed….I think, you know, things that we think as adults and staff members are good idea, you know, we, we, we, planned those things around our schedule and our time as, as, as, as what our demands that we have to , we had to shift the focus and make it user friendly for the students and the parents. Because they’re the ones who need to show up, we don’t need to show up, they…..we need them to show up. So, ummmmm, we don’t run a Saturday program, ahhhh, in our, in our program. We never have. We do one Saturday a month ummm; we don’t run a Saturday program because quite frankly we don’t have a place to run it. We don’t own our space, ummmm the building, if, if we have to be in the building we have to pay. Ummmmmm…….And, all other local community places they want to charge. So, what we’ve done is that we do ACT prep once a month on a Saturday. We call that college goal Saturday. You have to come to College Goal Saturday in order to go on fieldtrips. Ummm, you know, our attendance, we’ve got 60 students, we probably have about a fourth of those that show up and, and are consistent. So, the other students they don’t like it, but, you know, they get services in the building during the week. So, if you want to go, if you want to kind of be on that next level and take advantage of the summer trip you got to make that leap and do College Goal Saturday. Ummm, we do, you know, we have meeting with students. Ummmmmm, we do those during the day. We, ahhhhh, have students come during their lunch hour ahhhh of course we have after school tutoring and programming. We have parent meetings, ahhhh, once a month. We do one in the morning at one building at 10AM for the parents that are in one building. We’ve worked it out with the teachers and the ahhh and the administration so students can come to the meeting during class time. Ummm, we write them a pass back it happens once a month. And, then we also have a 6:00 meeting at another school where, you know, we’ve establish that that 6:00 meeting those parents come. So, we really had to adjust and, you know, really just tried to work on building relationships. We, you know, we know the stuff that we get from the Department of Ed. is mandatory you got have this, you got have that, you got to have this, but you can’t put…………people don’t care, at least
the people that we work with, the students and parents that we work with they could care less about a mandatory sticker.

Ummhmm

They really could. Because we are working with parents that, you know, their water is getting shut off tomorrow. And, somebody is telling them that that to keep their water on they got to have $500, that’s mandatory. Me, telling a parent that they have to come to a grade meeting and saying that it is mandatory and relevant it’s like, yeah right, I don’t think so. So, in order that….. get our parents and students engaged we really just (inaudible) working on or continue to work on……and anybody that comes on the staff have to understand that it is about students and the parents first, and then it is about the regulations, and the protocols and the processes……all of that stuff is secondary.

Ok. Has technology over the past decade impacted your program? If so, please explain.

Oh my God! We can text. We do email. We can Facebook them. We can tweet them. Oh, we can do all of that stuff. Ahhhhh, I think the biggest thing for me in…. in terms of the technology is because we have it in our office and its available and it’s ahh reliable that students know that they can come in our office…..if they get pull out of class, if they need to work on something they can come and that has been our draw. When we first started this program as soon as I got in here I was like we need to have computers and printers. So, you know, that was one of the big things and now since that time we partnered with the Education ahhh Department, the I T department at the coll….with the College of Education at MU. They love our program and so anything technology, I-Pads, anything that they are switching out we get. Ahhhh, so that’s been a really good relationship umm, that we built, ummmmm, with that program. And, so, be, being able to have people that see our needs, they saw our needs and they really stuck by our program which has been very effective and …..So, ummmm, you know, that’s, that’s technology of course, you know, it, it, it, it makes everything quicker. It’s immediate; I don’t have to call a student. I can send a student a text. A student wouldn’t want to talk to me, they will text me for two hours, but they won’t come see me.

(Laughs) Ok.

(Laughs)

What are the benefits students gain from being a participant in your program?

I think that they get timely information. I think they get accurate information ahhh, about college, about the college processes, about……. Life! Really, they, they gain an ally in that building. They gain a support network. They don’t gain a co-signer. And a, what I mean by that is they don’t gain somebody that’s just going to tell them what they want to hear. You know, we give them just as much support for when they’re wrong, they’re wrong. And, so, we help them build the skills necessary to talk to teachers, to become a better student advocate. To be….for parents to become a better advocate for their kid. So, if we ever left the building….if we ever close down shop, If we close down shop next, next year and don’t get refunded, they will never be able to say that they didn’t learn not only an academic skill, you know, how to do calculus and all that other stuff….I think
that is important, but also, the other skills that are necessary so that they can be successful beyond Upward Bound. You know, how to talk to professors. How to sit down and call the financial aid office and have a conversation and ask questions that…….And, being able to get on the Internet and find out information and not wait for somebody else to tell you what to do, but that you play offense and you go after the information. You don’t let somebody tell you no, who’s not empower to give you a yes. So, find somebody else to talk to. And, so, getting them to build that tenacity and that perseverance and endurance about their academics, about life that’s what we want them to do.

Ok. Ummm, Many of your students that I spoke to, former and current students, they sspoo…. spoke about how impactful the college tours were or they took part in and I’m wondering how do you go about choosing the college they…. they….. that your program will visit nnn…. how does that work out?

You know what, we work with a tour company XXXXXXX Specialty Tours, they’re out of ahhh, Atlanta. Mr. Jackson is from, originally from Ohio and he is pro empowerment, pro in education and particularly for African American students. So, we use him because not only does he plan the tours….he does everything. He does all of the transportation, he does all of that logistic stuff. So when we’re on those tours and we’re on that bus, we’re seeing colleges and then we’re talking about history. We’re talking about the Civil Rights movement. We’re talking about the fact that, you know, blacks couldn’t, you know, be educated. So we’re talking about those things. So, the kids get the full perspective of why college is important. So, when they come back and stuff starts happening in their lives, which we know it will, they will have had an experience that can motivate them and say, “You know what, yeah; this is really messed up in my life right now, but man this is not all that there is.” Those college tours are phenomenal. They are worth every penny that our program spends. Our students’ lives hands down are changed because of what they seen. Those tours, we’ve been to Ivy League schools, we’ve been to Historical Black Colleges and Universities, we’ve been to Vanderbilt, Duke…..They’ve seen everything. The most poorest of college or university campuses to the richest and everything in between. And, so what we expose them to is if this is what you want, you already know what your life is like right now, but if this is what you want this is how you going to have to work to get it. Because nobody is going to hand you anything. Those tours, when we come…..we don’t, we don’t have to say all you need to work hard. We’ll, we’ll let the experience because it’s the experience that will motivate people, it’s not, you better do this and you should do that. No, they got to have it inside for themselves so that when I’m not around, when you’re not around, when the teachers not around, when all hell is breaking loose in their home they got a special experience that is just for them that they can reflect on and say you know what, “I need to do what I need to do.”

Ok. My last question, what do you hope to see in the future for the program?

Well, you know, I think the, the program needs ahhhh new leadership. Ummmm, I think that it needs ummmmm, a fresh set of eyes and hands so that it doesn’t come stagnant. We are, we have a new crop of students and a new crop of parents and how parents view education and how they value education and it’s very different. And, so, I think that the the… the program has the potential to go to another level, but it also has the very, very big challenges, you know facing it. Because of the…the school district and and…. and
the ups, the ups and down they’re facing, you know the Department of Ed. and the scrutiny that the Department of Ed. faces in terms of making sure that students meet these certain benchmark when the educational system that the students face or go through before we get them has formed them. It has already formed them. So, you know, we trying to make a difference on, you know, 12 years of schooling before they get to us……9, 10 years of schooling before they get to us in an afterschool format.

Ummhmmm

You know, there, there’s going to need to be some serious conversation about whether or not that can happen. I’m not saying that it doesn’t happened, but in terms of the scale that the Department wants to… to see I am concerned about how that will be sustained if that the formative education, the elementary and the secondary doesn’t change.

Ummhmmm

I’m not saying that people lie on their APR, I just know what happens in my building and I know I’m not the only one. (Slight Laugh) So, you know, I, I I just think that…..I think there needs to be some different kind of conversations and different types of benchmark that we need to see for the programs in order for it to continue to be sustainable. Otherwise, the way that its weighed out now and the benchmarks that are out there now on a wide scale basis people’s programs, projects, are not going to be able to meet them. Not, not to approve, not the approval of the Department of Ed. and the legislator that are out there pushing and scrutinizing what it is that projects are doing. And, not holding accountable when we get them, how we get them.

OK.

How do you make a student who’s on a 7th grade reading level progress through your program, if you get them in the 9th grade, if you get them in 9th grade be prepared for college without needing any remediation in an afterschool program and, and with 3 or 4 summers? I don’t, I’m not saying it can’t happened, but in terms of the…. the larger numbers that the Department that I know they want to see . I don’t know. I…. I … I just, I don’t know. I don’t know if our program or any other program, I don’t know how long the federal government will be willing to support such a top heavy program in the long run. I don’t, I don’t know if, if it will continue to happen. Not at this scale.

Ok. That will conclude the interview. Ummmm, as I told everyone else I interviewed I will make a ummmm, ahhh transcri…transcribe your interview and email it to you. So you can look it over and if there’s any errors or anything you want to clear up that will be your chance to. And, I want to thank you for taking part in this interview.

You’re welcome sir.