



Christy James graduated from Wichita State in 2010 with a bachelor's degree in education. After receiving a masters in curriculum and instruction, James moved to Texas to further her teaching career. She currently teaches English at Bryan Adams High School where she serves as senior sponsor. She is the English team lead and AVID site team English representative. She loves to read, travel, and hike.

James signed up for Upward Bound Wichita Prep (UBWP) in 1999 at the age of 14. She wasn't considered a strong student at the time she joined the program but it was a couple of F's she received when it occurred to her that joining UBWP was the best decision at the time for her in reaching her academic and career goals. "It wasn't as much of a punishment as I expected it to be," James recalls. "I didn't know that it was more fun than anything else I'd ever done. It also made me realize that I had to shape up."

The rigorous academic expectations of UBWP helped prepare her for college success. She credits Rhonda Hicks, director of UBWP, with educating her about scholarships and "staying on top of things." James also took advantage of the McNair Scholars Program at WSU and worked as an instructor for UBWP.

"The friends you make in TRIO you keep for life," she says. "All of us have graduated from college and several of us have finished graduate school. Upward Bound really changed my life."

Andrea West entered her freshmen year of high school full of fear and confusion. Her life was full of disappointments as troubles continued at home and school. Basketball became her escape. However, "logistics" made it impossible for her to continue playing in high school.

She was introduced to Upward Bound through her high school counselor. She was told that the program could provide enrichment skills and academic support to help her go to college. Deltha Colvin invested in West. Colvin's support and encouragement gave her hope that college was a possibility.

Eventually, college became a reality as West enrolled at Sterling College on a basketball scholarship. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in education. Over the next three years, she earned a master's degree in education administration from Wichita State University. She is currently employed as a high school teacher in the same district.