On August 11, Ms. Tiffany Holloman joined the TRiO team as the new Administrative Assistant, replacing Mrs. Kimberly Brzozowski, who left TRiO Programs in July for a new position with CCCC as Career and College Advisor in Harnett Central High School. Ms. Holloman brings to this role previous work experience as a Clerical Assistant for the Upward Bound Program at the University of North Carolina and experience as a licensed attorney in the state of North Carolina. Tiffany started her education at North Carolina Central University, where she earned a Bachelor’s degree in Criminal Justice, then came to CCCC to earn a Paralegal Technology Diploma, before completing a Juris Doctorate through North Carolina Central University’s School of Law. Tiffany’s personal experience as a TRiO and Upward Bound alumna has motivated her to give back to TRiO programs in the past through her work as Bridge Coordinator at UNC Chapel Hill’s Upward Bound Program and Summer Internship Coordinator at CCCC’s UBMS Program. Tiffany is proud to join the staff of the TRiO Programs at CCCC and looks forward to serving the UBMS and VUB programs and their participants as they prepare for their future success!
On the evening of July 29th, Central Carolina Community College’s Upward Bound Math and Science program had a lot to celebrate. That night, students, parents, family members, program staff, and partners from CCCC and Harnett County Schools gathered to celebrate the culmination of an outstanding summer program for 61 Harnett County high school students and the 50th Anniversary of the federal TRiO program known as Upward Bound. Participants of CCCC’s Upward Bound Math and Science program, who are rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors in Harnett County high schools, basked in the glow of their accomplishments as they exhibited robots they built, showed films they created, told of their internship experiences, and received awards. Guests also honored and celebrated the Upward Bound program and its 50 years of impacting the lives of low-income and first-generation students across the nation through education.

Since 1964, Upward Bound has provided fundamental support to participants in their preparation for college entrance. Since that time, the U.S. Department of Education has provided funding to Upward Bound programs at colleges, universities, and non-profit organizations to provide services to eligible participants with the goal of increasing the rate at which they complete high school and enroll in and graduate from institutions of postsecondary education.

This summer at CCCC’s Upward Bound Math and Science program, funded for the first time in October 2012, rising 11th grade students in the program participated in UBMS’s second annual 6-week summer program designed to prepare participants for the college
experience. During the first three weeks a day camp at CCCC helped them to hone their math and writing skills and explore math and science programs through workshops with community college instructors. Students then said goodbye to their parents and families and moved onto the campus of North Carolina Central University in Durham for a 3-week residential college life experience. Here students attended classes in math, science, literature and composition, foreign language, and math and science electives; lived in a residence hall; ate in the cafeteria; exercised in the gym; studied in the library; and acclimated to life as a college student. This entire experience, designed to prepare the participants coming from first-generation backgrounds for life as a college student, allows students to visualize their futures at colleges and universities and helps break down barriers which low-income and first-generation college students often face.

While the group of rising 11th grade students was busy learning at CCCC and NCCU, rising 12th grade students were hard at work in Harnett County and beyond, participating in work-study internships in their careers of choice. This experience, designed to help students narrow their choices for college majors and prepare them for careers in their field after college, allowed students to work in fields such as veterinary medicine, zoology, agriculture, pharmaceutical research, forensic science, and emergency medicine at locations including Lillington Veterinary Hospital, Dunn Animal Hospital, Anderson Creek Emergency Services, Uncommon Care Urgent Care, Mrs. Picky Fanicky’s Foods, and Campbell University. Students were asked to commit to 25-30 volunteer hours per week for six weeks at their chosen internship sites and were rewarded by the UBMS program with a $450 stipend in return. Through the internship experience, students gained more realistic expectations about work in the field, learned what it takes to be successful, and developed relationships with mentors who can guide them on their journeys.
VUB Staff Attends Governor’s Focus Meetings to Better Serve Participants

As part of our community outreach and in an effort to stay informed about innovations in veterans’ services, the Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) staff has been attending the Focus Meetings for the Governor’s Working Group on Veterans, Service Members and Their Families. The Focus Meetings gather leaders from public, private, and non-profit veteran serving organizations. The monthly Focus Meetings are used to discuss improving services in one of 4 areas: Education, Employment, Healthcare and Support, and General Veteran Benefits.

On May 22 VUB staff members learned about the services provided by NCNG Education and Employment Centers (EEC), which include career assessment, job seeking, employment preparation, and interview preparation, as well as providing information on Education Entitlements, MOS/AFSC translation, certification resources, and other veteran to civilian transition resources. These services are provided at satellite sites across North Carolina as shown below. From the representatives of the Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS), the VUB staff was reminded that the DWS employs at least one veteran specialist at most regional Employment Security Centers (ESC) who is often a veteran himself, and is focused on getting North Carolinians the leads, tools, and information they need to get back into the workforce.

Finally, the VUB staff was enlightened about veteran hiring practices by Mrs. Kimberly Lindsay, a former corporate HR manager. Mrs. Lindsay spoke emphatically about the common misconceptions that Human Resources (HR) managers often have about veterans, and how her former employer, the Department of Defense’s Employment Initiative Program (IEP) in Virginia, was re-educating HR managers about the distinct advantage of hiring employees with military service because their service has built the
Character, leadership, problem-solving skills, teamwork, and tenacity which corporate America demands.

During the July Focus meeting speakers from LegalAid of NC and NC Vets Legal detailed the services that they can provide to veterans. Both organizations provide assistance with legal issues at minimal costs to clients. Dealing with legal issues can be confusing if you don’t know where to start, and don’t know how to get help. The connection between VUB and LegalAid has already led to the positive resolution of legal issues for one of our VUB participants and the availability of counsel for a few others.

Other notable connections that we have made because of the Focus Meetings include housing agencies like Support Services for Veteran Families (SSVF), Family Endeavors, Volunteers of America Carolinas, and the NC housing Finance Agency Foreclosure prevention fund. Each of these organizations in some way tries to assure that service members get into or keep their homes. We have also met the Veteran Service Officer (VSO) for Wake county Douggy Johnson who acts as the benefits liaison between veterans and the VA.

Attendance at the Governor’s Focus Meetings has helped the VUB staff to stay abreast of current issues pertaining to veterans in the state of North Carolina, and has also allowed us to directly connect with leaders in the veteran service community. The staff is excited to put this new knowledge and new connections to work in assisting our participants with reaching their goals, and looks forward to continuing to learn more at future Governor’s Focus Meetings. If you could benefit from being connected with any of the resources listed in this article, please contact our office at (919) 718-7463 to learn more.

On July 10, 2014 the Veterans Upward Bound program hosted Veteran Appreciation Day with food and fun for its participants. The afternoon program was designed to show appreciation for the participants and celebrate all their hard work toward college enrollment and degree completion. At the event, participants were greeted with hotdogs and hamburgers hot off the grill with all the sides and fixins. Participants and the Veterans Upward Bound staff celebrated another successful year with food, games, and a bouncy house for the kids. Among the participants that attended, Isaac Phillips and his wife, Andrea, enjoyed a round of corn hole with the VUB staff. Veteran Sergeant Phillips served in Afghanistan as a part of Operation Enduring Freedom. Veterans Upward Bound recently assisted Phillips with his application to the C-STEP Program and, since his acceptance in September, he plans to earn a University Transfer Associate’s Degree from CCCC then transfer to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to study Biomedical Engineering. Other participants that attended and enjoyed the event were Veteran Army Specialist Angela Letendre and her family (whose husband is also a service member), Veteran Army Private First Class Brenda Blue and her mother, and other new members of the VUB program. Please stay tuned for future opportunities to connect with VUB participants and celebrate the program’s success!
Since January 2nd, NC VetsCorps member Bob Immormino has been providing additional services to the participants of the Veterans Upward Bound program. NC VetsCorps is an AmeriCorps program that aims to assist veterans and military families and is managed by MDC, a national nonprofit organization with roots in North Carolina that has been publishing research and developing programs focused on expanding opportunity, reducing poverty, and addressing structural inequity for more than 40 years. Bob is a former research scientist with a PhD in Biochemistry from Duke University and post-doctoral research experience at Duke University, the University of Washington, and UNC Chapel Hill. At CCCC Bob’s primary goal is assisting veterans participating in the Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) program as well as assisting other CCCC community veterans and their family members. The specific assistance that Bob can provide includes referral services to available community resources, and assistance with accessing tax credits, public benefits, student financial aid, and veterans’ education and training benefits through the Benefit Bank of North Carolina. During this past year at CCCC Bob has directly assisted over 50 veterans with tax preparation, social services, and educational goals. In addition to his work with veterans Bob has initiated a bi-annual food drive in support of disadvantaged elementary and middle school students in partnership with Communities in Schools (CIS) of Lee and Chatham Counties and Backpack Buddies of Harnett County. Bob also leads a tutoring program for Veterans Upward Bound refresher classes, Upward Bound Math and Science students in Harnett County, and Upward Bound students at Lee Senior High School. In his next year of service Bob hopes to continue expanding services to veterans. In addition to acting as a referral to community, state and federal programs, Bob hopes to help more veterans save time and money by filing their taxes through the Benefit Bank of North Carolina. Bob is also interested in continuing and expanding his community outreach. Bob will continue volunteering to pack backpacks for the CIS Backpack Pals program, serve at the Breadbasket, attend the jobseekers fellowship at First Baptist Church, and find more ways to be a community advocate. If you or your family is in need of Bob’s assistance, please contact him at (919) 718-7463 or robert@nc-vc.org.
Veterans Upward Bound to Host College Fair

Veterans Upward Bound in collaboration with Veterans Affairs will be hosting a Veteran College Fair and Veterans Day Memorial on Friday, November 14, 2014 at the Dennis A. Wicker Civic Center in Sanford, NC. Bojangles of Pittsboro, a co-sponsor of the event, will provide lunch for participants. This event will honor veterans for their dedication and service as well as provide information from various public and private institutions. Veterans will be honored from 9:00AM to 10:00 AM with a special memorial service. The College Fair will be conducted from 10:00AM to 1:00PM where veterans can gather information on NC colleges and universities. We look forward to enjoying this special event with you and our veterans!