



### Kelly Fick

TRIO Upward Bound

I clung to the log and peeked down the Giant's Ladder. 35 feet below, I caught sight of my TRIO Upward Bound teammates. I surpassed the UB climbing record, by myself. As I finally made it down to the welcomed sanctuary, my team surrounded and applauded me. It was the first step with my new, second family, and since that day three years ago we have traveled miles.

Staff members have given me tools and assistance to follow the college treasure map. They have helped me become more independent, step out of my comfort zone and become more confident in my future and how to get there. My forehead wrinkles over college costs. My college-going brother and sister constantly call for food money. My parents and I go weeks without groceries. I, apply for scholarships.

I spend a LOT of time with TRIO. My favorite journey was to Western Washington University's College Quest and my Environmental Science and Sustainability course. I discovered my dream university and career there. Without UB sponsoring me, there was no way my parents could have afforded sending me.

I met the Upward Bound involvement challenge and became insanely involved in school activities. For TRIO, I am a three-year, Leadership Team/Student Advisory Council participant. This holds the most meaning to me. It is where I have learned the most leadership skills. I see how I have changed and grown. I now realize my own type of leadership. Being on the team helped me recognize where I can excel and break boundaries.

 <http://www.washingtontrio.org/>



## Upward Bound

In 2007 Peninsula College was awarded its first TRIO Upward Bound grant to serve 50 first-generation and low income yearly. Peninsula College is the only postsecondary institution based in the 3,553 square miles known as the Olympic Peninsula. Within such vast geographic reach the PC Upward Bound program serves high school students from small towns and rural communities in Clallam County including students from 5 distinct Native American Tribes. The program, now in its 9th year, serves students from five target high schools of the Port Angeles, Quillayute Valley, and, Quileute Tribal School Districts. The area population income levels are very low, especially for students who live on tribal reservations. In an area where only 8.34% of residents have attained a Baccalaureate degree or higher, it is imperative to prepare first generation, low income students for postsecondary education. Upward Bound sees to the academic, social, and emotional needs of its students by tutoring, mentoring, and encouraging students to become lifelong learners, remove barriers to success and discover their passions and hidden strengths. PC Upward Bound students have consistently exceeded the program's objectives for secondary school retention and graduation as well as postsecondary enrollment rates. With a small but powerful, caring and dedicated staff, all who were also first generation students including 2 UB alumni, they work hard to build relationships with students and make an impactful difference in each student's postsecondary preparation and persistence.

# TRIO