



FUTURES IN FOCUS

Annual Impact Report

2024-2025

Colorado Mesa
University
TRIO Upward Bound



Introduction

This year, Colorado Mesa University's TRIO Upward Bound program celebrated a powerful truth: when students are given opportunity, support, and belief, they rise.

With First-Gen in Focus, the 2024–2025 year was filled with stories of determination, growth, and success. Further proof that first-generation and income-eligible students are **not only ready for college, but ready to lead.**

Together, our Upward Bound community surpassed every program objective and reached new heights. The Class of 2025 earned more than \$500,000 in grants and scholarships, turning dreams into reality and opening doors to colleges and universities across the country. Our students earned competitive scholarships, earned admission to colleges across the nation, including highly selective institutions, and showed that hard work and heart can overcome any barrier.

Behind every success story is a team of mentors, educators, and families who believe in the potential of our students. Their encouragement, coupled with our students' resilience, remind us why Upward Bound exists: **to make college dreams possible for those who dare to imagine them.**

As we reflect on this remarkable year, we celebrate not just the achievements, but the journeys that brought our students here. With First-Gen in focus, we honor their courage, their commitment, and the bright futures they are building, one success story at a time.

Shelby Burroughs Pryzgoda,
Director, TRIO Upward Bound



The Future is First-Gen

OUR MISSION

TRIO Upward Bound (UB) at Colorado Mesa University is a federally funded college preparatory program designed to support local first-generation, income-eligible students at Central High School and Grand Junction High School as they prepare to enter and succeed in college.

Participants enjoy in-depth support during the academic school year and summer break, including:

- **Academic tutoring** in core subjects including reading, writing, math, science, and study skills.
- **One-on-one advising** with a trained college counselor to prepare for success in high school and beyond.
- Assistance in preparing for **college entrance exams** and completing college **admissions applications**
- Training in federal and state **financial aid** programs, **scholarship completion**, and **FAFSA support** for students and families.
- **College and career exploration** through campus visits, career interest surveys, and connections with local industry partners.
- **6-week Summer Academy** including on-campus living, supplemental academic instruction, and social activities.

Upward Bound is **free of charge** for students and families.

Annually, the TRIO Upward Bound program submits performance reports to the Department of Education to track and celebrate student successes.



“Upward Bound made me realize my academic value to institutions like MIT. I can say with certainty I would not be where I am if I never joined Upward Bound.”

**Donavin Brown,
GJHS Class of 2027**

93%

Upward Bound participants are **first-generation**, with neither parent having a 4-year college degree.



25%

Upward Bound participants are **Multilingual Learners**, speaking a native language other than English.



23

Upward Bound students graduated in the **Class of 2025**

Futures in Focus: Who We Serve

Upward Bound **serves 60 students each year**, as outlined by federal program regulations. To ensure we reach those who benefit most from additional support, at least two-thirds of our participants must meet both low-income and first-generation criteria, indicated in gray below.

During the 2024–2025 program year, roughly half of our students attended Central High School and half attended Grand Junction High School. This structure ensures our program remains focused on advancing equity and opportunity for students who face the greatest barriers to higher education.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY		
	# of Participants	%
At-Risk for Academic Failure Only	1	1.67%
First-Generation and At-Risk for Academic Failure	5	8.33%
First-Generation Only	10	16.67%
Low-Income and At-Risk for Academic Failure	1	1.67%
Low-Income Only	2	3.33%
Low-Income and First-Generation	26	43.33%
Low-Income, First-Generation, and At-Risk for Academic Failure	15	25.00%

58%

Upward Bound participants **worked a part-time job** in addition to their academic and personal responsibilities.

81%

Upward Bound participants identify as students from racial and ethnic backgrounds other than White.

Annual Performance Objectives

The annual objectives for Upward Bound are established based on the ambitious yet achievable standards outlined in the 2022 Upward Bound project proposal.



1

63% of Upward Bound participants will have a GPA above 2.5 at the end of the school year.

2

48% of Upward Bound seniors will have **proficient scores in math and English Language Arts.**

3

87% of project students will **continue to the next year or will have graduated from high school.**

4

48% of all current and prior Upward Bound participants who graduated from high school will **complete a rigorous program of study.**

5

62% of all current and prior Upward Bound participants will **enroll in college directly following high school graduation.**

6

38% of participants enrolled in college following high school graduation will **obtain an associates or bachelors degree within 6 years.**



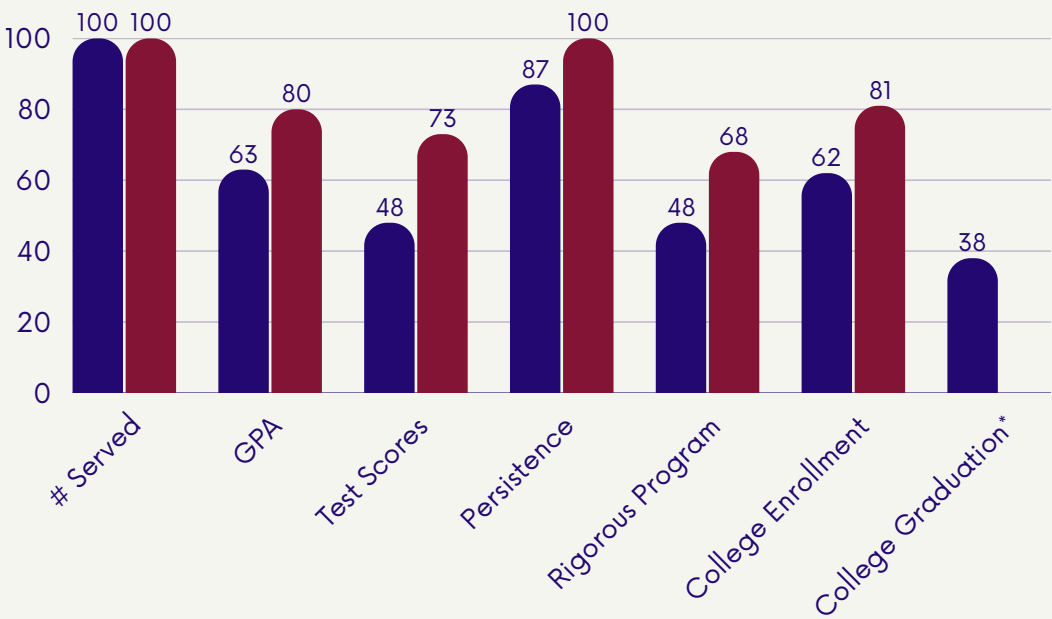
First-Gen Excellence in Action

CMU Upward Bound exceeded all performance objectives in 2024-2025, earning maximum “Prior Experience Points” for the upcoming 2027 Upward Bound grant competition.

UPWARD BOUND OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES 2024-2025

- Grant objectives as outlined in approved proposal
- **Attained rate based on 2024-2025 outcomes**

Note: all outcomes below are percentages



Annual Performance Objectives	Annual Objective Goal	Year 2 (23-24) Program Outcomes	Year 3 (24-25) Program Outcomes
Number Served (60)	100%	100%	100%
Annual GPA 2.5+	63%	70%	80%
Testing Proficiency	48%	53%	73%
Persistence	62%	100%	100%
Rigorous Program	48%	68%	68%
College Enrollment	62%	77%	81%
College Graduation*	38%	0%	0%

*No data available based on current grant cycle (year 3 of 5-year grant)

3.2

Average GPA for Upward Bound participants, with 66% of students earning a GPA of 3.0 or above.

68%

Upward Bound participants enrolling in at least one **Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment** course.

3.68

Average college GPA for Upward Bound students taking concurrent enrollment classes at Colorado Mesa University.

Class of 2025: Ready to Rise

The Class of 2025 enhanced the Upward Bound program, with twenty-three graduates achieving significant success by securing a record number of scholarships, gaining admission to highly selective institutions, as well as earning industry certifications and Seals of Biliteracy.

100%

FAFSA Completion Rate for Graduates, including those not immediately entering higher education

FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Each year, Colorado Mesa University's TRIO Upward Bound program celebrates the achievements of graduating seniors who **turn college dreams into reality**. Their accomplishments reflect the power of persistence, purpose, and the promise of first-generation scholars shaping their futures.

- **81% of Upward Bound graduates enrolled in college immediately after high school**, more than 30 percentage points higher than the District 51 average of 49.9% (Colorado Department of Education, Matriculation Rate, High School 2025).
- Students pursued their **various career and college pathways** through majors including: Nursing, Criminal Justice, Radiological Sciences, Engineering, Environmental Science, Welding, Theatre Arts, Business, Political Science, and Education.
- **60% of Upward Bound graduates enrolled at Colorado Mesa University** in the fall of 2025, with others choosing to attend Howard University, the University of Minnesota, and multiple in-state institutions including the University of Colorado Boulder.
- Upward Bound students **stacked up local scholarship awards** including 1st and 2nd place in the Cesar Chavez photo essay competition, the Central High School Beckley Weaver scholarship, two Reisher Ready scholars, and Saccomanno Scholarship winners.
- Upward Bound seniors completed **161 concurrent credits** at Colorado Mesa University, **averaging a concurrent GPA of 3.68**.

3.41

Average cumulative GPA for the Class of 2025



CLASS OF 2025 COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES

Colorado Mesa University
University of Colorado Denver
Colorado State University
University of Colorado Boulder

Colorado School of Mines
University of Northern Colorado
Embry Riddle Aeronautical Inst.
Western Colorado University
Metro State University

Howard University
University of Indiana
University of Minnesota
New York University
Southern Utah University

Rising First-Gen Leaders: Success at Every Level

Mock Congress Champion at 2025 NSLC in Washington, D.C.

Johnathon (GJHS Class of '27) helped lead the winning team at the National Student Leadership Congress in D.C., where students debated the future of the Department of Education and met with national leaders to share their first-gen experiences.



Students Stack Up Industry Credentials

In the 2024-2025 year, Upward Bound students earned college credentials in Applied Business, Nurse Aide, and Early Childhood Education. Jubilee (CHS '26) is pictured graduating with her CNA certificate in December 2024.



Upward Bound Scholar Shines at Colorado School of Mines' SUMMET Program

Terrence (GJHS '26) was selected for the 2025 SUMMET program at Colorado School of Mines. The SUMMET program is tailored for rising first-gen high school seniors and provides hands-on engineering simulations and instruction.



Record Number of Graduates Earn Prestigious Seal of Biliteracy

Five graduates in the Class of 2025 earned the Seal of Biliteracy, recognizing their mastery of English and another language. Sara and Delaynie (GJHS '25) are pictured.

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Advanced Placement
Courses Taken by
Upward Bound Students
in the 24-25 year

195

Concurrent credits
earned by CMU Upward
Bound students in the
24-25 year

Upward Bound Student Accepted to Prestigious MIT Program

Donavin (GJHS '27) was selected as one of 20 students nationwide for the STARS @ MIT program. He traveled to Boston for hands-on STEM workshops and mentorship from MIT students and faculty.



First-Gen in Focus: Partnerships Fuel Excellence

Upward Bound's impact is made possible through the commitment of our partners, educators, and community supporters.

Colorado Mesa University
CMU Tech
Mesa County Valley School District 51
Colorado State University Western Campus
Center for Independence
Kids Aid
Riverside Education Centers
Colorado Canyons Association
Western Colorado Empowerment
Mesa County Workforce Center
Mesa County Department of Human Services
School District 51 REACH Program
School District 51 Family Partnerships
La Plaza
Connect for Good
Colorado Chapter of ASPIRE
Council for Opportunity in Education

Your collaboration helps first-generation students access opportunity, achieve their goals, and build brighter futures.

Together, we are making college dreams a reality on Colorado's Western Slope.

**Thank you for your
steadfast commitment to
our students and
programs.**

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