



Released March 31, 2011

## **MSCC Student Wins Scholarship at TRiO Day Event**

Betty Allen, a first-semester student at Mid-South Community College, enjoyed some “beginner’s luck” at the recent National TRiO Day observance in North Little Rock. The West Memphis resident won a scholarship (approximately \$350) during a random drawing on the campus of Pulaski Technical College.

“It was very surprising because all week I was battling whether to stay in school or drop out, but I decided to go on the trip,” Allen said. “Winning the scholarship has encouraged me stay in school.”

High school and college TRiO students throughout the state solicited donations from their campuses to create the scholarship fund. MSCC has contributed the most money the past two years, but this is the college’s first award winner. Allen is a participant in the Educational Opportunity Center program at Mid-South.

“When they announced the name, ‘Betty,’ everyone in our group got really excited, but I didn’t think it would be me,” Allen said. “I couldn’t believe it.”

“She was really excited about the scholarship, and I was really excited for her,” said EOC Counselor Donna Shaull who traveled with the MSCC students to the event. “It was great to see one of our students win, especially since we have raised the most money the last two years.”

Allen enrolled at MSCC in January because she couldn’t find a job. She had never been to college.

“I brought my niece to MSCC last year to help her get signed up for college,” Allen explained. “When I was there, they said, ‘Why don’t you sign up?’ I said, ‘No, I’m too busy. I’m taking care of elderly or sick people.’ So then they asked me, ‘What do you have to fall back on?’ and I said, ‘nothing.’ And they said, ‘Why don’t you apply?’ So I did.”

During her years in the workforce, Allen said she did a little bit of everything: security, warehouse, and janitorial service. Now she wants to become a Certified Nursing Assistant.

“I want to start out there since that’s what I like to do; I like taking care of people,” she said. “If I make progress in that, I might take other steps to go a little bit higher. I’m excited about school. I haven’t been to school for a while, so I’m catching up. It’s going to take a minute, but I’m getting there.”

Ten MSCC students participated in the statewide TRiO event. Mellody Selph, Mid-South Student Support Services counselor, also made the trip. More than 500 students across Arkansas registered to attend.

“It’s a great opportunity for TRiO students to communicate, get to know one another, and find out what the other programs are doing,” Selph said. “It also gives them a chance to hear testimonials from other students and to realize that they’re not the only ones who are facing challenges in their pursuit of education. I think that’s something most our students could relate to.”

Students also filled out comment cards that will be forwarded to Washington D.C.

“It was good for our students to express their gratitude and let Congress know how important the TRiO programs have been to them,” Shaull said. “It’s very important to the future of this program for students to voice their opinions and tell their stories.”

Created in 1965, TRiO programs have assisted more than 10.5 million men and women in their efforts to pursue higher education and training.

For more information about student support programs at MSCC, call (870) 733-6728, see the website at [www.midsouthcc.edu](http://www.midsouthcc.edu), or visit the campus at 2000 West Broadway in West Memphis.