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## Analyzing Locational and Socio-economic Factors to Determine Efficacy of TRIO Programs in Metropolitan New Orleans

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Analyzing Locational and Socio-economic Factors to Determine Efficacy of TRIO Programs in  
Metropolitan New Orleans

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of New Orleans  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts  
in  
Geography

by

Rita Samrow Camaille

B.A. University of New Orleans

May 2013

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and to TRIO staff for their understanding

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## **Abstract**

This study is a predictive model to ascertain whether various factors such as income, educational attainment, and ethnicity could predict the success of students participating in TRIO programs at the University of New Orleans. President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration identified low-income and first-generation students as the most under-served population needing attention as well as those most "at-risk." Educational Talent Search programs were founded in 1965 as outreach programs to provide services and activities to the "at-risk" population to promote high school retention and graduation rates. The University of New Orleans has three Educational Talent Search programs serving Jefferson, Orleans, and St. Tammany Parishes. The demographic data from 1770 participants were collected and a study conducted to determine whether there would be a correlation among the following factors: (1.) ethnicity, (2.) income, (3.) educational attainment, and (4.) geography.

**Keywords:** Educational Talent Search programs, low income, first generation

## Chapter 1

### *Introduction*

After working with youth in various areas of education a question often asked is, what factors play a role in the success of high school students in regards to passing and graduating? Family income and educational attainment are two factors the U.S. Department of Education uses in the selection criteria for students participating in one of the TRIO Programs. The study conducted here added the elements of location and ethnicity to the mix. “Researchers and educators increasingly have recognized the important role of race-related beliefs and experiences in the academic achievement of ethnic minority children and adolescents.” (Chavous) These four factors (income, educational attainment, location, and ethnicity) were used to determine whether or not the success of students can be predicted.

Data was collected from three Talent Search (TS) program (discussed in detail in Chapter 2) databases operated from the University of New Orleans. The TS programs serve Jefferson, Orleans, and St. Tammany Parishes (Figure 1).

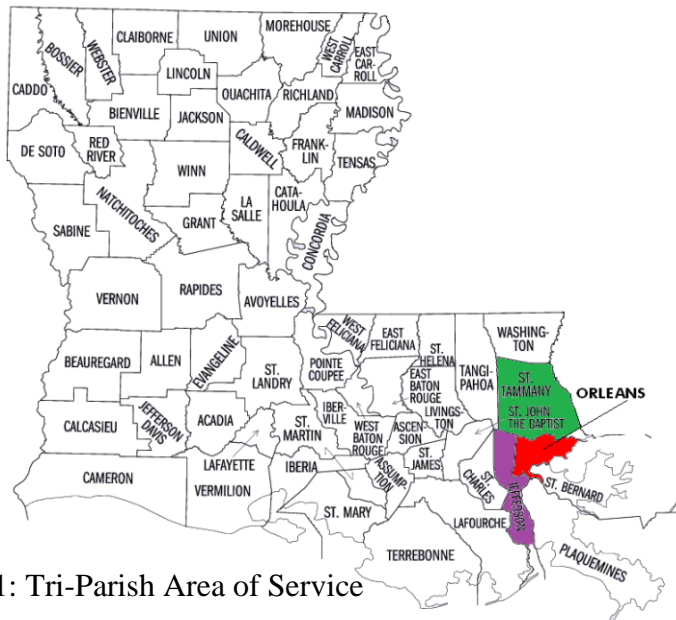


Figure 1: Tri-Parish Area of Service

The specific details that were obtained for each participant were address, ethnicity, income, first generation status, and end of year status. End of year status is defined as: whether a student in grades 7-11 passed and progressed to the next grade level and whether a senior graduated or not.

Data was collected from the American FactFinder using census tract as a base for income and educational attainment. After the data were assembled, census tract information for each student was obtained so that distribution maps could be made showing the areas of concentration where students lived. After reviewing the data supplied in the census tract information, it was apparent that the students were widely dispersed over the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan Area. Thus there was a need to group census tract areas and analyze them to attain some answers.

The maps that follow show the concentration of students living in the three-parish area. The total number of participants residing in each parish is: Jefferson Parish; 519, Orleans Parish: 719, and St. Tammany: 490 totaling 1,770 for the three-parish area. For statistical purposes each parish was broken down and grouped by census tract areas. Census tract was chosen because data were available for all criteria being analyzed.

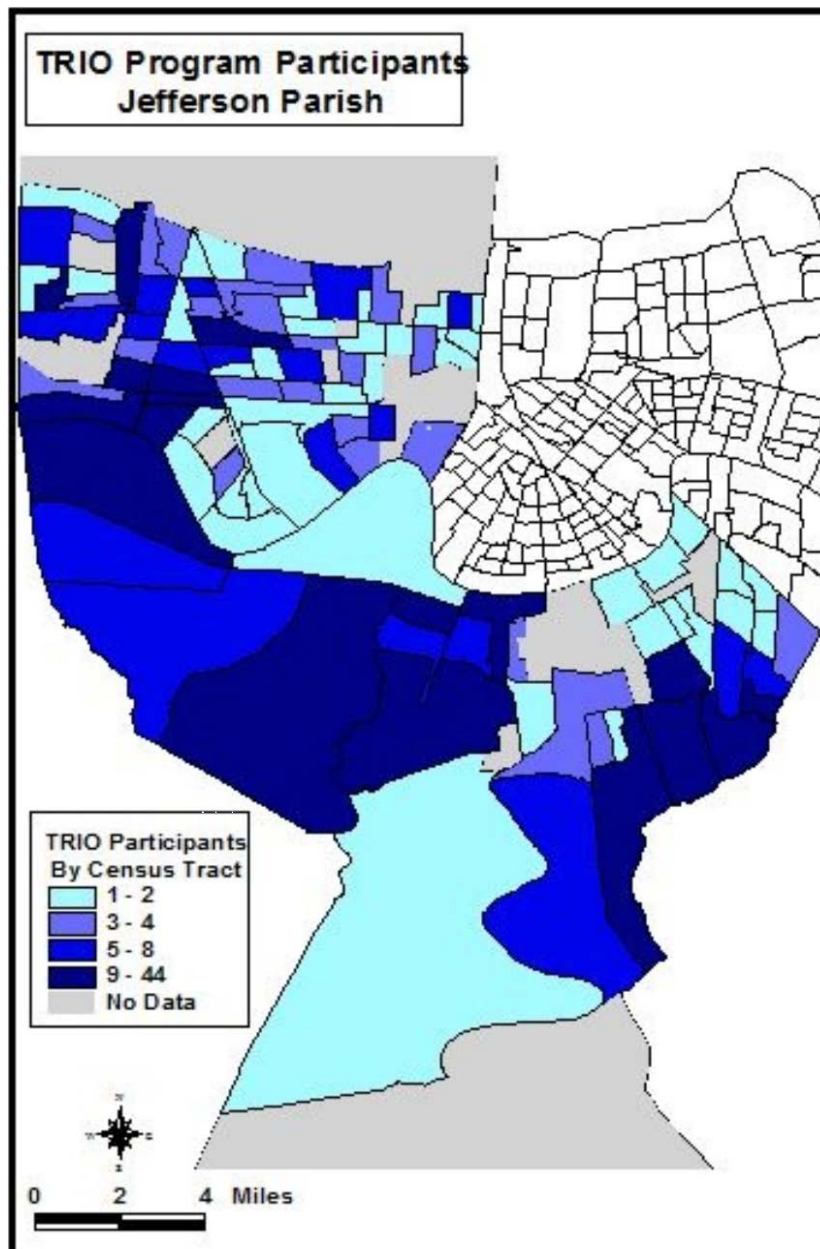


Figure 2: TRIO Program Participants – Jefferson Parish

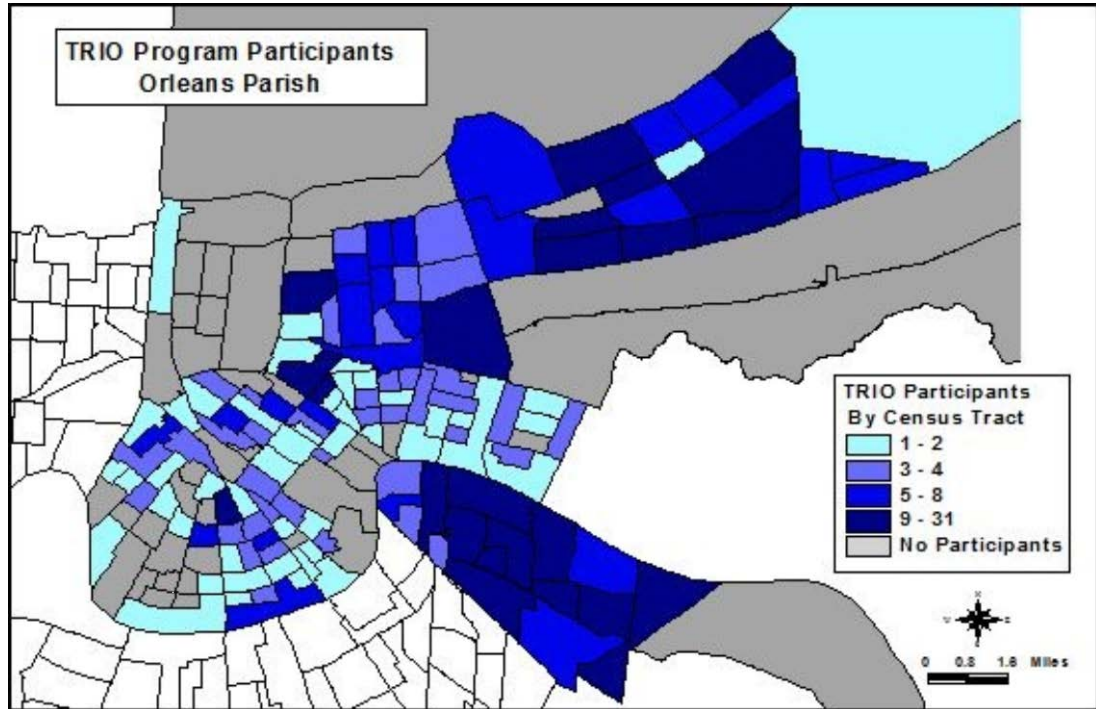


Figure 3: TRIO Program Participants – Orleans Parish

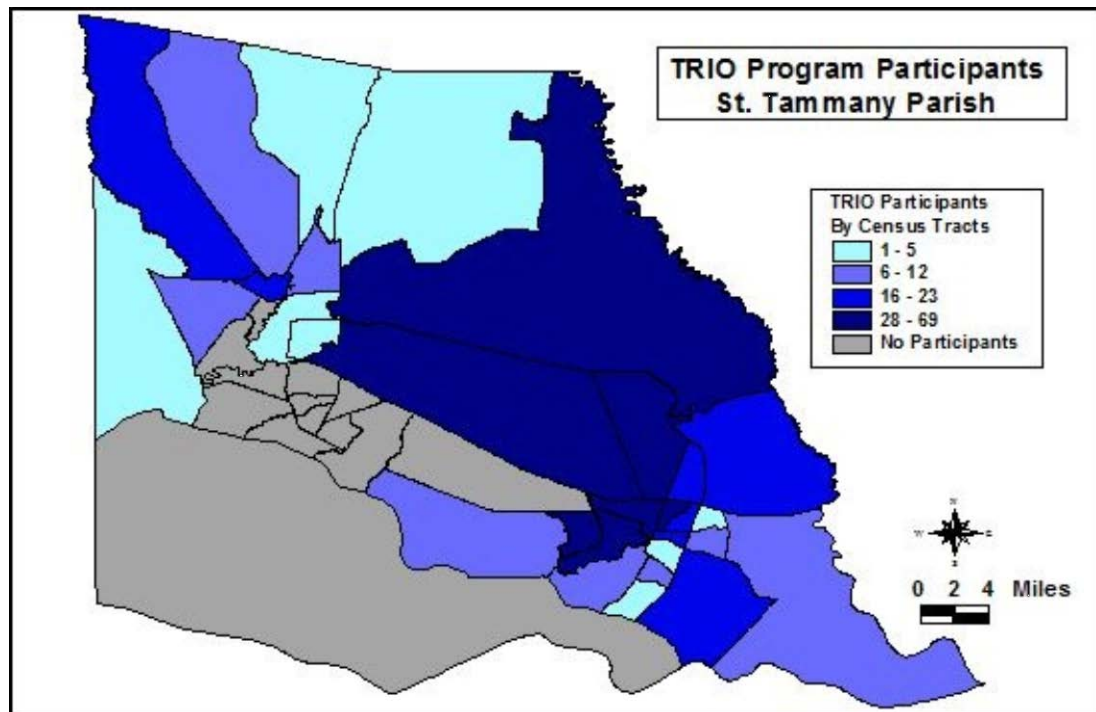


Figure 4: TRIO Program Participants – St. Tammany Parish

In summary, the following factors are used to predict whether a student passes or graduates: area, income, first generation status, and ethnic background. Also, the results of this research will be used to determine where more concentrated services should be located. A logistic regression and Chi-square analysis was done to explain the results which are discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

## **Chapter 2**

### ***TRIO Programs***

This thesis will examine whether there is a locational impact on the educational success of low-income and/or first-generation students by participating in a Talent Search Program. Talent Search Programs are designed to give support and guidance to help students complete high school and postsecondary programs of study. Talent Search assists students to become aware of financial aid sources and also assists the students in entering postsecondary education and/or training program. This study attempts to prove that geography and socio-economic conditions play a role in the graduation rates of students based on the census tracts where the students live.

The group of students included in this study comes from the three Talent Search programs at the University of New Orleans. Talent Search programs are federally funded by the U. S. Department of Education and fall under the umbrella of TRIO Programs. The Department of Education's mission is "to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensure equal access." (U.S. Department of Education)

The U.S. Department of Education has been given the task of overseeing more than \$71 billion for programs designed specifically for educational purposes. Funds are awarded to states, educational institutions, agencies, and school districts. Talent Search projects are given the task to ensure that all students have the opportunity to get an education, have a fair and equitable chance to graduate from high school, successfully matriculate in a post-secondary education or training program, and persist to completion of postsecondary program. Information regarding

Talent Search programs and other TRIO Programs can be found on the U.S. Department of Education's website (U.S. Department of Education).

TRIO Programs began during the presidency of Lyndon Johnson as his administration's response to the socio-economic conditions of inner city youth. Upward Bound (UB) projects were the first of the TRIO Programs started in 1964, followed by the Educational Talent Search (TS) in 1965, and the Student Support Services (SSS) in 1968. Other TRIO Programs initiated under the TRIO umbrella are: Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC), Training Programs for Federal TRIO Programs, Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate Achievement Program (McNair), Upward Bound Math/Science (UBMS), and the Veterans Upward Bound (VUB). All TRIO Programs are designed to assist disadvantaged and/or "at risk" students to become successful citizens in their community. There were a total of 2,947 projects funded through the Department of Education for the seven programs under the TRIO umbrella in 2011. The total amount of funding was \$875,406,353 to serve 797,248 low-income, first-generation, and disabled students who have been under-served and under-represented. The average per participant cost is \$1,098. (U.S. Department of Education - Awards)

All TRIO Programs must guarantee two-thirds of their participants are from low-income and/or first-generation backgrounds or are students with disabilities. Low-income is defined as a family income which does not exceed 150% of the federal poverty level and first-generation is defined as an individual whose biological parents did not achieve a baccalaureate degree. (U.S. Department of Education, Title 34, Part 643, §643.7) A disability as defined by The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has a three-part definition. Under ADA, "an individual with a disability is a person who: (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or (2) has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as



having such an impairment.” (Americans with Disabilities Act) A physical impairment is defined by ADA as "any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, hemic and lymphatic, skin, and endocrine." (Americans with Disabilities Act) A participant in the Talent Search programs must show potential and motivation to complete high school, and enroll in and graduate from a post-secondary program.

As mentioned earlier, this thesis examines the participants of three Talent Search programs at the University of New Orleans. The three programs are Project ACCESS (Accessing College and Career Education for Special Students) that exclusively serves students with disabilities, Orleans-Jefferson Educational Talent Search (OJETS), and St. Tammany Educational Talent Search (STETS). Each of these programs serves students from a three-parish area (Jefferson, Orleans, and St. Tammany) who attend public middle and/or high schools in grades 7-12.

The University of New Orleans’ Project ACCESS: Educational Talent Search has been in operation since 1991. The participants come from Orleans and Jefferson Parish schools. ACCESS has been successful in meeting its objectives annually, and has completed four grant cycles which ranged from 3 to 5 years. The current grant cycle started with the 2011-12 program year and will operate for 5 years.

Orleans-Jefferson Educational Talent Search (OJETS) and St. Tammany Educational Talent Search (STETS) programs began in the 2006-07 academic year. OJETS recruits and serves participants from the Orleans and Jefferson Parishes and STETS recruits and serves participants from the St. Tammany Parish Schools. All program activities are designed to

increase retention, graduation, and postsecondary entry rates. The second cycle which started in the 2011-12 academic year was funded for 5 years. Both programs were successful during their first cycle at meeting all of their objectives.

In setting up the model, the grant proposals written for 2011-12 grant cycle were utilized as a guide to develop the basic framework. The proposal first needed to spell out three key elements before the objectives and plan of operation could be written. The three elements are the selection of the target area, target school, and neediest of population. According to grant requirements each program must target at least five schools within a region to serve. The U.S. Department of Education requires programs to provide services in depth instead of breadth meaning TS programs must serve more students in fewer schools. Schools were selected because they can provide students who meet the qualification of academic need. The student populations, who are in grades 7-12, are either in regular education or students with disabilities who are in regular classes or in special education.

### Chapter 3

#### *Geographic and Demographics of Target Area and Schools*

In this chapter the geographic and demographic information for the target areas and target schools will be examined along with the obstacles students face in graduating from high school and entering a post-secondary institution or training program. Since one of the programs (Project ACCESS) serves students with disabilities, disability information will be given throughout. For the purpose of simplicity, AOS will be used instead of all three Talent Search programs.

Table 1 summarizes the geographic and demographic characteristics of the target area as well as the state. The three parishes encompass 4% of the total land mass (43,562 square miles) while housing 22% (1,010,121) of its population. Even though the ethnicity of Louisiana residents is majority White (60.3%), Orleans has a majority population of African American (59.6%).

| <b>Table 1: Geographic and Demographic Information</b>            |                  |                |                    |                  |
|---|------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|
|   | <b>Jefferson</b> | <b>Orleans</b> | <b>St. Tammany</b> | <b>Louisiana</b> |
| Square Miles <sup>1</sup>   | 608              | 181            | 854                | 43,562           |
| Population <sup>2</sup>   | 432,552          | 343,829        | 233,740            | 4,533,372        |
| Ethnicity <sup>2</sup> White                                      | 56.0%            | 30.5%          | 80.6%              | 60.3%            |
| African-American  | 25.9%            | 59.6%          | 11.3%              | 31.8%            |
| Hispanic  | 12.4%            | 5.2%           | 4.7%               | 4.2%             |
| Other   | 5.7%             | 4.7%           | 3.4%               | 3.7%             |
| <i>Source:</i> <sup>1</sup> U. S. Census 2010 Demographic Profile |                  |                |                    |                  |

Orleans, Jefferson, and St. Tammany Parishes were severely damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. During that time, the parishes embarked on the arduous tasks of not only transforming their communities but also restructuring their school systems. The New

Orleans Metropolitan Area, which includes Jefferson, Orleans, and St. Tammany Parishes, is still suffering from a lack of funding, perceived lack of leadership, and loss of population. According to a Greater New Orleans Community Data Center article released in 2012 regarding the Hurricane Katrina Recovery, “The 2010 Census counted New Orleans’ population at 343,829, or 71 percent of its 2000 population of 484,674. The metro area, with 1,167,764 residents, has 90 percent of its 2000 population of 1,316,510.” (GNOCDC, 2012) Much of New Orleans’ population is made up of young adults, especially young professionals, wishing to be part of the revitalization of an historic area. Due to the devastation of the low-income housing stock and community resources in the New Orleans Metropolitan Area, many low-income families have not returned. As a result, the demographic make-up of the metro area has experienced a transformation to a majority of middle/upper income level families and educated individuals.

ACCESS exclusively serves students with disabilities who meet the criteria for participation in an Educational Talent Search program. Table 2 highlights the student population in Orleans, Jefferson, and St. Tammany Parish public and private schools. According to the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE), in 2010-2011 Orleans, Jefferson and St. Tammany parish schools’ total enrollment was 190,954 students. Students with disabilities who are in special education placement constitute 12.7% (24,437) of the total student population. (Louisiana Department of Education, State of Special Education, 2010-2011)

| <b>Table 2: Overall Student Population<br/>in Orleans, Jefferson and St. Tammany Parish Schools</b> |                             |  |  |
|---|-----------------------------|--|--|
|   | <b>Total<br/>Population</b> | <b>Regular Ed. In Public<br/>&amp; Private Schools</b> | <b>Special Ed. In Public<br/>and Private Schools</b> |
| Jefferson   | 73,763                      | 65,474   | 8,289  |
| Orleans   | 63,602                      | 57,473   | 6,587  |
| St. Tammany   | 53,589                      | 44,028   | 9,561  |
| Total   | 190,954                     | 166,975  | 24,437   |
| Source: Louisiana Department of Education: State of Special Education, 2010-11                      |                             |  |  |

Table 3 shows that in the target area, there are 128,192 (32.44%) families living at or below poverty index. Orleans Parish has the highest percentage of families below poverty (47.19%). This rate is 5.28% greater than that of the state (41.91%). As stated earlier, the poverty index used by TRIO programs is 150% of the poverty level which means a family income should not exceed \$34,575.

| <b>TABLE 3: Number &amp; Percent of Families in the Target Area Living<br/>at or Below 150% of Poverty Level</b> |                   |                        |                        |
|--|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Target Area</b>   | <b># Families</b> | <b># Below Poverty</b> | <b>% Below Poverty</b> |
| Jefferson  | 166,696           | 36,298                 | 37.97%                 |
| Orleans  | 142,093           | 67,051                 | 47.19%                 |
| St. Tammany  | 86,363            | 24,843                 | 28.77%                 |
| 3-Parish Total   | 395,152           | 128,192                | 32.44%                 |
| STATE  | 1,689,822         | 708,204                | 41.91%                 |
| <i>Source: US Census Bureau: 2010 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates</i>                                 |                   |                        |                        |

According to the National Poverty Center at the University of Michigan, in 2010, 15.1% of all persons lived in poverty. The poverty rate in 2010 was the highest poverty rate since 1993. Children represent a disproportionate share of the poor in the United States; they constitute 24% of the total population and 36% of the poor population. In 2010, 16.4 million children, or 22.0%, were poor. The poverty rate for children also varies substantially by race and Hispanic

origin. (National Poverty Center) However, according to the 2010 District Composite Reports (Table 4), the rate of students participating in the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program in target schools is 60% on free and reduced lunch. Out of the fifteen target schools, eight target schools have a percentage of students on free and reduced lunch above 60%. These schools are designated with an asterisk.

| <b>TABLE 4: Number &amp; Percentages of Economically-Disadvantaged Students in Target Schools Using Free/Reduced Lunch as defined by Department of Education</b>           |                         |               |                   |
|--|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Target Schools</b>  | <b>Total Enrollment</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
| Jefferson  |                         |               |                   |
| A. T. Bonnabel High  | 1,499                   | 938           | 63% *             |
| East Jefferson High  | 942                     | 560           | 59%               |
| Helen Cox High   | 910                     | 673           | 74% *             |
| L. W. Higgins High   | 1,470                   | 1,112         | 76%*              |
| Riverdale High   | 687                     | 385           | 55%               |
| Grace King High  | 1,188                   | 585           | 49%               |
| John Ehret High  | 1,766                   | 1,213         | 71% *             |
| Orleans  |                         |               |                   |
| Sarah T. Reed High   | 588                     | 451           | 77% *             |
| Warren Easton High   | 849                     | 725           | 85% *             |
| Sophie B. Wright High  | 348                     | 346           | 99% *             |
| O. P. Walker High  | 861                     | 750           | 87% *             |
| St. Tammany  |                         |               |                   |
| Covington High   | 1,532                   | 695           | 45%               |
| Pearl River High   | 721                     | 395           | 55%               |
| Northshore High  | 1,549                   | 370           | 24%               |
| Slidell High School  | 1,707                   | 753           | 44%               |
| Total/Average  | 16,617                  | 9,951         | 60%               |
| Definition: Students who are eligible for free or reduced priced lunch, as described in sections 9(b)(1) and 17(c)(4) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act. |                         |               |                   |
| Source: School Report Card for Principals, 2009-2010   |                         |               |                   |
| * Schools served by two programs (ACCESS and OJETS)  |                         |               |                   |

Table 5 shows the graduation statistics for the target schools. According to the Louisiana Department of Education, Cohort Graduation Rates by parish are: Jefferson 62%; Orleans 70%; and St. Tammany 76%. (State Department of Education Principal's Report Cards – 2009-10)

When reviewing this table it is interesting to note that St. Tammany Parish schools are graduating students at a much higher rate (75.4%) than the Cohort Graduation Rate of the other two parishes. Jefferson Parish Cohort Graduation Rate is 61.1% which is 11.3 points lower than St. Tammany. At the time this research was carried out, graduation information for Orleans Parish schools was not available.

| <b>TABLE 5: Target High School Students Graduating with a Regular Secondary School Diploma - 2009-10 Graduating Seniors</b> |                  |                        |                |                               |
|---|------------------|------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Target High Schools</b>  | <b># Seniors</b> | <b>Total Graduates</b> |                | <b>Cohort Graduation Rate</b> |
|   |                  | <b>Number</b>          | <b>Percent</b> |                               |
| Jefferson   |                  |                        |                |                               |
| A. T. Bonnabel High School  | 361              | 218                    | 60%            | 52%                           |
| East Jefferson High School  | 255              | 189                    | 74%            | 61%                           |
| Helen Cox High School   | 209              | 143                    | 68%            | 64%                           |
| L. W. Higgins High School   | 350              | 222                    | 63%            | 59%                           |
| Riverdale High School   | 259              | 161                    | 62%            | 63%                           |
| Grace King High School  | 385              | 261                    | 68%            | 66%                           |
| John Ehret High School  | 535              | 336                    | 66%            | 63%                           |
| Orleans   |                  |                        |                |                               |
| Sarah T. Reed High School   | N/A              | N/A                    | N/A            | N/A                           |
| Warren Easton High School   | N/A              | N/A                    | N/A            | N/A                           |
| Sophie B. Wright H. S. High School  | N/A              | N/A                    | N/A            | N/A                           |
| O. P. Walker High School  | N/A              | N/A                    | N/A            | N/A                           |
| St. Tammany   |                  |                        |                |                               |
| Covington High School   | 412              | 330                    | 80%            | 72%                           |
| Pearl River High School   | 228              | 168                    | 74%            | 64%                           |
| Northshore High School  | 339              | 296                    | 87%            | 86%                           |
| Slidell High School   | 380              | 311                    | 82%            | 76%                           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>3,713</b>     | <b>2,635</b>           | <b>71%</b>     |                               |
| <i>Source: State Department of Education Principal's Report Cards – 2009-10</i>   |                  |                        |                |                               |
| NOTE: N/A -- Orleans Parish schools had not reported their graduation information to the State Department of Education.     |                  |                        |                |                               |

Cohort Graduation Rates takes into account the number of student dropouts between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. In reviewing the graduation rates, it can be concluded that there are a high percentage of dropouts (even beyond expected levels) in each of the target schools, particularly in Jefferson Parish. This statistic is supported by the following statement from the National Center for Education Statistics, “the status dropout rate represents the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in school and have not earned a high school credential (either a diploma or an equivalency credential such as a General Educational Development [GED] certificate). The status dropout rate declined from 14% in 1980 to 8% in 2009. A significant part of this decline occurred between 2000 and 2009 (from 11% to 8%).” (National Center for Education Statistics)

First Generation status is one of the criteria used for selection to participate in any Talent Search program. “First generation,” as defined by the U.S. Department of Education, refers to a student’s whose parents have not received a Bachelor’s degree or higher. Table 6 reveals that only 28% of target area residents have a bachelor’s degree or higher. The statistics indicate an urgent need to prepare students for entry into higher education.

| <b>Table 6: Percent of Individuals Residing in the Target Area with Education Completion Levels Below the Baccalaureate Level</b> |                             |                 |                     |                           |                           |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|   | <b>Less than HS Diploma</b> | <b>HSD/ GED</b> | <b>Some College</b> | <b>Less than Bachelor</b> | <b>Bachelor or Higher</b> |
| Jefferson   | 18%                         | 32%             | 22%                 | 77%                       | 23%                       |
| Orleans   | 17%                         | 27%             | 25%                 | 68%                       | 32%                       |
| St. Tammany   | 12%                         | 28%             | 30%                 | 70%                       | 30%                       |
| Louisiana   | 19%                         | 34%             | 25%                 | 79%                       | 21%                       |
| United States   | 15%                         | 29%             | 28%                 | 72%                       | 28%                       |
| Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2006-2010   |                             |                 |                     |                           |                           |
| Legend: HSD/GED=High School Diploma/Graduate Equivalency Diploma  |                             |                 |                     |                           |                           |



Assistance with postsecondary enrollment is high on the list of important services which TRIO Programs are required to facilitate for its participants. Table 7 documents the postsecondary enrollment rate of high school seniors who graduated in the recent year that data was available (2009-10). Thirty-nine percent (39%) of target schools' graduates enrolled in postsecondary education in the fall following their high school graduation. This clearly shows that postsecondary enrollment, in the target schools, is far below that of the state (48%) and the nation (70%).

| <b>TABLE 7: Low Rates of Enrollment in Programs of Postsecondary Education by Graduates of the Target High Schools</b> |                   |                              |                   |
|--|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Target High Schools</b>   | <b>% Enrolled</b> | <b>Target High Schools</b>   | <b>% Enrolled</b> |
| <b>Jefferson</b>   |                   | <b>Orleans</b>               |                   |
| A. T. Bonnabel High School   | 42%               | Sarah T. Reed High School    | N/A               |
| East Jefferson High School   | 34%               | Warren Easton High School    | 65%               |
| Helen Cox High School  | 51%               | Sophie B. Wright High School | N/A               |
| L. W. Higgins High School  | 39%               | O. Perry Walker High School  | N/A               |
| Riverdale High School  | 48%               | <b>St. Tammany</b>           |                   |
| Grace King High School   | 49%               | Covington High School        | 56%               |
| John Ehret High School   | 45%               | Pearl River High School      | 42%               |
|  |                   | Northshore High School       | 61%               |
|  |                   | Slidell High School          | 58%               |
| <b>AVERAGE of Target</b>   | <b>39%</b>        | <b>STATE</b>                 | <b>48%</b>        |
|  |                   | <b>NATION</b>                | <b>70%</b>        |
| <i>Source:</i> State Education Department – Fall 2010  |                   |                              |                   |
| NOTE: N/A = Not Available  |                   |                              |                   |

According to the National Center for Special Education Research, “forty-five percent of youth with disabilities reported having continued on to postsecondary education within 4 years of leaving high school. Youth with disabilities were reported to be more likely to have enrolled in 2-year or community colleges (32%) than in vocational, business, or technical schools (23%) or 4-year colleges or university (14%), and of those options, were least likely to enroll in 4-year colleges.” (National Center for Special Education Research, 2009) There are many other factors

that present barriers to students enrolling and succeeding in a postsecondary education program of their choice. Some of these barriers are, but not limited to: low academic achievement and low standardized test scores, and students-to-school counselors ratios. Following is a brief review of these barriers.

### **Low academic achievement and low standardized test scores**

A stumbling block for high school students is requirements for graduation. This is where the TRIO programs may assist its student by offering study skills and test taking skills. Table 8 clearly shows that students are not performing up to the state's high stakes tests requirements. Spring 2010 tests results show the average percentage of students passing the state standardized assessment tests in English and math at the proficient level. The percent of students scoring at the proficient level in English for the target schools is 12.6% which is 4 points lower than the state (17%). The percentage of students scoring at the proficient level in math for the target schools is 22.5% which is 7.5 points lower than the state (30%).

| <b>TABLE 8: Poor Performance of Students on the State Assessment Test (NCLB)</b> |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Target Schools</b>  | <b>% of Students Proficient:<br/>Exam - English</b> | <b>% of Students Proficient:<br/>Exam - Math</b> |
| A. T. Bonnabel High School   | 8.9%  | 25.2%  |
| Covington High School  | 20.2%   | 30.9%  |
| Helen Cox High School  | 16.4%   | 14.5%  |
| East Jefferson High School   | 14.3%   | 26.6%  |
| Warren Easton High School  | 11.1%   | 14.1%  |
| John Ehret High School   | 14.6%   | 19.7%  |
| L. W. Higgins High School  | 5.6%  | 16.1%  |
| Grace King High School   | 10.3%   | 20.6%  |
| Northshore High School   | 27.2%   | 51.7%  |
| Pearl River High School  | 14.4%   | 26.0%  |
| Sarah T. Reed High School  | 3.3%  | 4.2%   |

| <b>TABLE 8: Poor Performance of Students on the State Assessment Test (NCLB)</b> |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Target Schools</b>  | <b>% of Students Proficient:<br/>Exam - English</b> | <b>% of Students Proficient:<br/>Exam - Math</b> |
| Riverdale High School  | 24.9%   | 29.5%  |
| Slidell High School  | 14.2%   | 30.3%  |
| O. P. Walker High School   | 3.8%  | 21.1%  |
| Sophie B. Wright High School   | 0.0%  | 8.3%   |
| AVERAGE  | 12.6%   | 22.5%  |
| STATE  | 17%   | 30%  |
| <i>Source: State Education Department – Principals Report Card – 2009-2010</i>   |   |  |
| NOTE: N/A = School did not have a graduating class or is a Middle School         |   |  |

High ACT scores are required in almost every 4-year college. Table 9 indicates that students in the target schools do not perform as well academically as their peers on the national college entrance tests. The average American College Test (ACT) composite score for the target schools is 18.8 which are lower than the average composite scores of Jefferson (19.0), Orleans (19.2) and St. Tammany (21.8), as well as the state (20.2) and the nation (21.1).

| <b>Table 9: ACT Composite Scores by School</b> |                      |                             |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Target Schools</b>                          | <b>ACT Composite</b> | <b>+/- National Average</b> |
| A. T. Bonnabel High School                     | 18.3                 | -2.8                        |
| Covington High School                          | 20.9                 | -.2                         |
| Helen Cox High School                          | 16.8                 | -4.3                        |
| East Jefferson High School                     | 18.7                 | -2.4                        |
| Warren Easton High School                      | 17.6                 | -3.5                        |
| John Ehret High School                         | 18.2                 | -2.9                        |
| L. W. Higgins High School                      | 17.5                 | -3.6                        |
| Grace King High School                         | 19.8                 | -1.3                        |
| Northshore High School                         | 23.1                 | 2.0                         |
| Pearl River High School                        | 20.5                 | -.6                         |
| Sarah T. Reed High School                      | 15.3                 | -5.8                        |
| Riverdale High School                          | 18.6                 | -2.5                        |

| <b>Table 9: ACT Composite Scores by School</b>                 |                      |                             |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Target Schools</b>  | <b>ACT Composite</b> | <b>+/- National Average</b> |
| Slidell High School  | 20.5                 | -.6                         |
| O. P. Walker High School                                       | 17.8                 | -3.3                        |
| Sophie B. Wright High School                                   | N/A                  | N/A                         |
| <b>Total Average</b>   | 18.8                 | -2.3                        |
| <b>Jefferson</b>   | 19.0                 |                             |
| <b>Orleans</b>   | 19.2                 |                             |
| <b>St. Tammany</b>   | 21.8                 |                             |
| <b>STATE</b>   | 20.2                 |                             |
| <b>U.S.A.</b>  | 21.1                 |                             |
| Source: Louisiana Department of Education, ACT Composite, 2011 |                      |                             |

### **Students-to-School Counselors Ratio**

For students to understand the curriculum required for high school graduation, possible career opportunities, and the requirements needed to enroll in postsecondary education, a guiding hand must be available during these developing stages to ensure student success. Therefore, the integration of academic advising, career planning, financial aid strategies, postsecondary enrollment and goal achievement after graduation provides the framework for the needed relationship between high school students and counselors. According to the American Counseling Association, when the student/counselor ratio exceeds 250:1 (American Counseling Association)

As Table 10 reflects, the student/counselor ratio in the target schools averages 354:1 with a high of 588:1. With these large student-to-counselor ratios, it is easy to assume that there are a lot of students who may fall through the cracks because they do not have the necessary attention needed to explore optional paths for their futures.

| <b>TABLE 10: Ratio of Students to Counselors in Target Schools</b>     |                      |             |                  |
|--|----------------------|-------------|------------------|
| <b>Target Schools</b>  | <b># of Students</b> | <b># of</b> | <b>Student :</b> |
| A. T. Bonnabel High School   | 1,499                | 4           | 375:1            |
| Covington High School  | 1,532                | 4           | 383:1            |
| Helen Cox High School  | 910                  | 4           | 228:1            |
| East Jefferson High School   | 942                  | 3           | 314:1            |
| Warren Easton High School  | 849                  | 3           | 283:1            |
| John Ehret High School   | 1,766                | 5           | 353:1            |
| L. W. Higgins High School  | 1,470                | 3           | 490:1            |
| Grace King High School   | 1,188                | 3           | 396:1            |
| Northshore High School   | 1,549                | 4           | 387:1            |
| Pearl River High School  | 721                  | 2           | 361:1            |
| Sarah T. Reed High School  | 588                  | 1           | 588:1            |
| Riverdale High School  | 687                  | 2           | 344:1            |
| Slidell High School  | 1,707                | 5           | 341:1            |
| O. P. Walker High School   | 861                  | 3           | 287:1            |
| Sophie B. Wright High School   | 348                  | 1           | 348:1            |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>16,617</b>        | <b>47</b>   | <b>354:1</b>     |
| <i>Source: Target School Counselors and Administrators – Fall 2011</i> |                      |             |                  |

In a report published by the American Youth Policy Forum (2009), “Many high school guidance counselors are not able to assist students with career exploration, assessment, and development, and are often unfamiliar with industry certification programs and work-based learning opportunities due to the large case loads and the focus on college enrollment.” (Hooker and Brand, p. 8)

### **Socio-economic Problems**

According to a report presented at the American Youth Policy Forum on Postsecondary Access and Success, “Of the students that graduate high school, only 53% enter college directly from high school and only 35% earn a college degree. Lack of academic preparation, low socioeconomic status, fear of the unknown or perceived inadequacies to attain a college degree

are all barriers that can challenge a student's ability to complete high school and persist to higher education?" (American Youth Policy Forum)

As of May 2012, Louisiana had an unemployment rate of 7.2 %. (Louisiana Unemployment, Department of Numbers) Because it is difficult for some adults to remain part of the workforce, the heavy responsibility of taking care of siblings or working in order to assist in the support of the family fall on the shoulders of school-aged children. These responsibilities take a toll on the academic preparedness to complete high school let alone enter college without having to take remedial classes.

## Chapter 4

### *Statistical Study of TRIO Participants*

Socio-economic status of students, income level and potential first generation, is important to the selection of participants for the Talent Search programs. There were 1,770 students who were selected for participation in the Talent Search programs at the time this analysis was performed. The eligibility of the three programs is: Low Income & Potential First Generation – 1,273 (72%), Low Income Only – 104 (6%), Potential First Generation only – 261 (15%), and Other – 132 (7%). Even though ethnicity is not a criterion for selection into the TS programs, ethnicity does play a role in the statistical analysis that follows. The ethnicity of the Talent Search participants is: African-Americans – 1,137 (64%), Hispanic or Latino – 56 (3%), White – 420 (24%), more than one race – 100 (6%), and other – 57 (3%). For the statistical purposes more than one race and other were combined.

This thesis started by identifying 1,770 students currently being served by the three Talent Search Programs at the time the statistics were run. For comparison, the students were considered as part of their respective parish grouping. For each student, the data collected included: (1) location of student, (2) passed or failed grade, (3) graduation, (4) income, (5) potential first generation status, and (6) ethnicity. The American FactFinder was used to obtain census tract data for median income and educational attainment. Statistics regarding first generation and median income was obtained from the same source.

The Statistical Analyses System (SAS), a statistical software program, was used for data analysis. A logistic regression model was utilized because each factor analyzed had binary

elements, i.e. yes or no. After initial examination and analysis, 11 students were removed from the analysis because the data was incomplete. The final analysis included 1,759 students.

The analysis considered the relationship between pass/graduate with area, low income (yes/no), potential first graduation (yes/ no) and race (African-Americans, Hispanic, Other, and White). The statistical analysis was performed with first the pass/fail and then with the graduation status.

The following maps depict the areas that were used for statistical analysis. The boundaries for each area were drawn arbitrarily using as many natural boundaries (i.e. river, lake, parish lines, and streets). Each area is outlined in red. There are 4 areas for Jefferson, 4 areas for Orleans, and 2 areas for St. Tammany. The areas were drawn keeping together adjacent census tracts.



Jefferson Area 1 extends from Lake Ponchartrain to I-10 and from Kenner to the Jefferson-Orleans parish line. Jefferson Area 2 extends from I-10 south to the Mississippi River and from St. Charles-Jefferson parish line to Jefferson-Orleans parish line. Jefferson Area 3 extends from the Mississippi River across from the St. Charles/Lafourche Parish lines east to Barataria Boulevard. Jefferson Area 4 extends south of the Mississippi River from Barataria Boulevard to the Orleans Parish line.

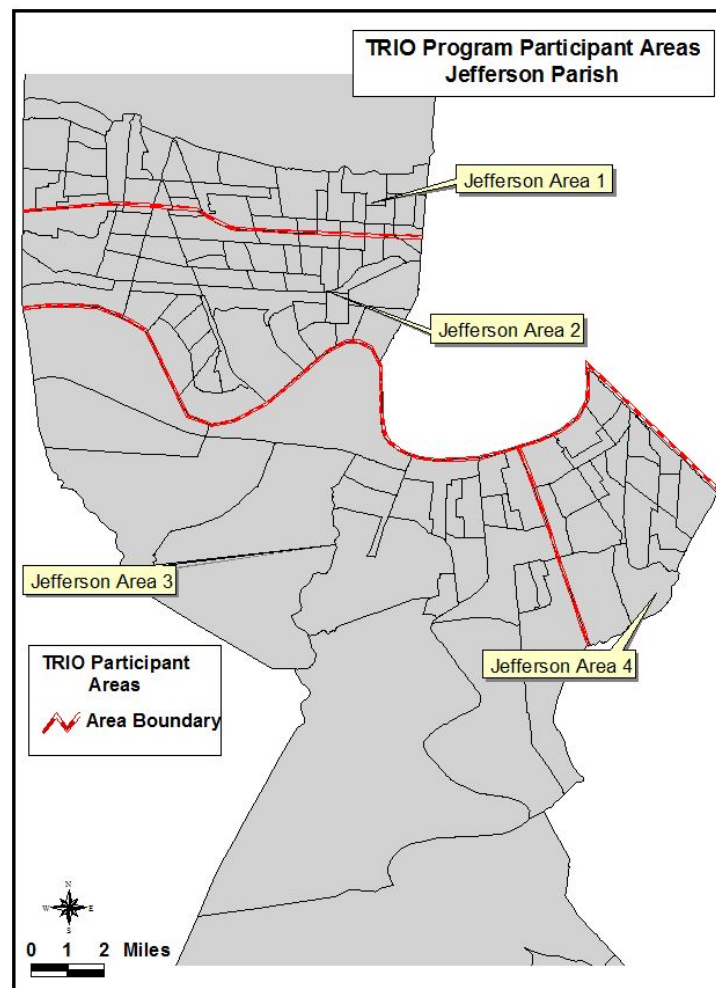


Figure 5: TRIO Program Participant Areas – Jefferson Parish

Orleans Area 1 includes the entire west bank of Orleans Parish. Orleans Area 2 extends from the Industrial Canal east to the Orleans Parish line. Orleans Area 3 extends from the Mississippi River north to include Uptown, Central City, and Mid-City. Orleans Area 4 extends from the Orleans-Jefferson parish line to the Industrial Canal from Lake Ponchartrain to border of Orleans Area 3.

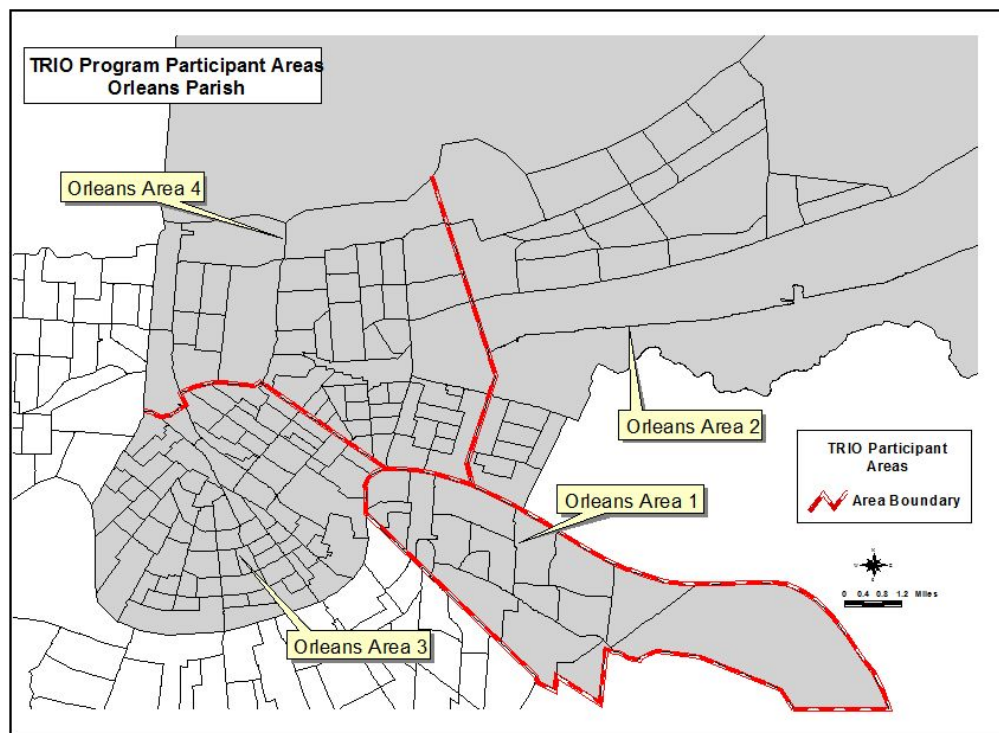


Figure 6: TRIO Program Participant Areas – Orleans Parish

St. Tammany Area 1 extends west from the St. Tammany Parish line to include Slidell and Pearl River areas. St. Tammany Area 2 extends from the Tangipahoa and Washington Parish lines east to include the Mandeville and Covington areas.

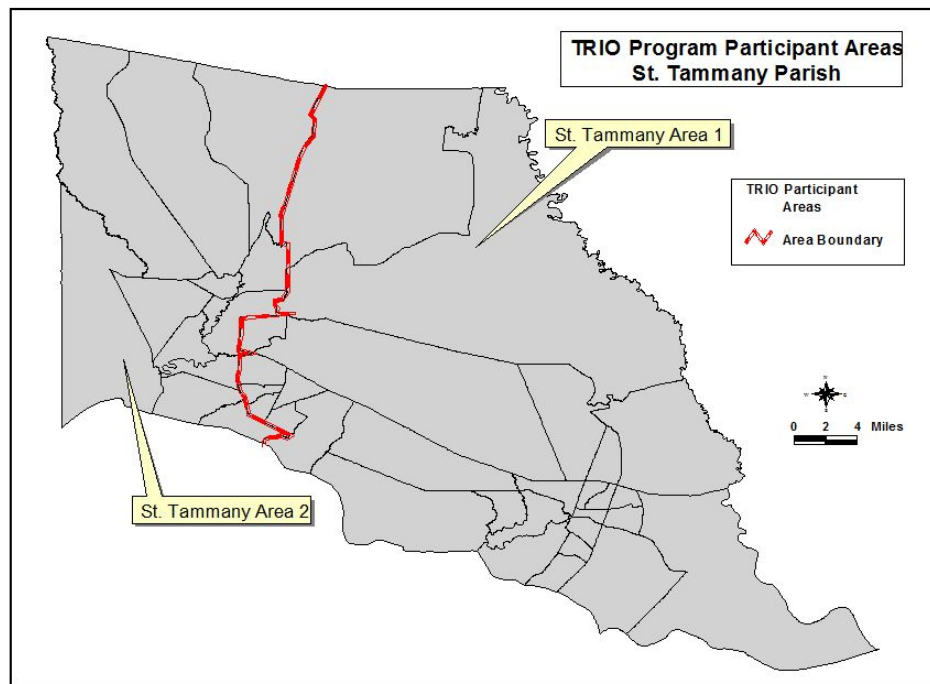


Figure 7: TRIO Program Participant Areas – St. Tammany

## Pass Rate.

**For 3 different parishes** – Jefferson Parish is different from St. Tammany (chi square = 4.24, p-value = 0.0394); Orleans Parish is different from St. Tammany (chi square = 4.80, p-value = 0.0285), meaning the 3 parishes have different pass rates. Table 11 shows that the pass rates for participants of Talent Search programs in Jefferson (94.57%), Orleans (93.90%), and St. Tammany (97.35%) it should be noted that all are well above 90%.

| <b>Table 11: Three Parish Pass Data and Analysis of Maximum Likelihood Parameter Estimates</b> |           |                       |               |                 |               |                 |                 |                   |                |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| <b>Parameter</b>   | <b>DF</b> | <b>Total Students</b> | <b>Passed</b> | <b>% Passed</b> | <b>Failed</b> | <b>% Failed</b> | <b>Estimate</b> | <b>Chi-Square</b> | <b>P-value</b> |
| Intercept  | 1         |                       |               |                 |               |                 | 3.4916          | 94.30             | <.0001         |
| Jefferson  | 1         | 368                   | 348           | 94.57%          | 20            | 5.43%           | -0.7753         | 4.24              | 0.0394         |
| Orleans  | 1         | 590                   | 554           | 93.90%          | 36            | 6.10%           | -0.8382         | 4.80              | 0.0285         |
| St. Tammany  | 0         | 490                   | 477           | 97.35%          | 13            | 2.65%           | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Not Low Income   | 1         | 264                   | 254           | 96.21%          | 10            | 3.79%           | 0.4559          | 1.46              | 0.2274         |
| Low Income   | 0         | 1184                  | 1125          | 95.02%          | 59            | 4.98%           | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Not First Generation   | 1         | 188                   | 181           | 96.28%          | 7             | 3.72%           | 0.0934          | 0.05              | 0.8279         |
| First Generation   | 0         | 1260                  | 1198          | 95.08%          | 62            | 4.92%           | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| African-Americans  | 1         | 913                   | 865           | 94.74%          | 48            | 5.26%           | 0.0494          | 0.02              | 0.9015         |
| Hispanic   | 1         | 42                    | 40            | 95.24%          | 2             | 4.76%           | -0.0108         | 0.00              | 0.9892         |
| Other  | 1         | 132                   | 125           | 94.70%          | 7             | 5.30%           | -0.2100         | 0.17              | 0.6761         |
| White  | 0         | 361                   | 349           | 96.68%          | 2             | 3.32%           | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Scale  | 0         |                       |               |                 |               |                 | 1.0000          |                   |                |

**Jefferson Parish** – Table 12 shows that in the 4 areas of Jefferson Parish have similar pass rates. Since none of the p-values are close to the .05, there are no significant areas in Jefferson Parish. Jefferson 4 has a 100% pass rate with the remaining areas at or over 90% indicating that Jefferson 4 might be a slightly better place to live as far as passing from one grade to the next is concerned.

| <b>Table 12: Jefferson Parish Pass Data and Analysis of Maximum Likelihood Parameter Estimates</b> |           |                       |               |                 |               |                 |                 |                   |                |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| <b>Parameter</b>   | <b>DF</b> | <b>Total Students</b> | <b>Passed</b> | <b>% Passed</b> | <b>Failed</b> | <b>% Failed</b> | <b>Estimate</b> | <b>Chi-Square</b> | <b>P-value</b> |
| Intercept  | 1         |                       |               |                 |               |                 | 2.8109          | 14.47             | 0.0001         |
| Jefferson 1  | 1         | 68                    | 62            | 91.18%          | 6             | 8.82%           | -0.6851         | 1.10              | 0.2940         |
| Jefferson 2  | 1         | 112                   | 109           | 97.32%          | 3             | 2.68%           | 0.7571          | 1.02              | 0.3133         |
| Jefferson 3  | 1         | 98                    | 93            | 94.90%          | 5             | 5.10%           | 0.3315          | 0.28              | 0.5978         |
| Jefferson 4  | 0         | 90                    | 84            | 93.33%          | 6             | 6.67%           | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Not Low Income   | 1         | 107                   | 104           | 97.20%          | 3             | 2.80%           | 1.1242          | 2.29              | 0.1304         |
| Low Income   | 0         | 261                   | 244           | 93.49%          | 17            | 6.51%           | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Not First Generation   | 1         | 63                    | 60            | 95.24%          | 3             | 4.76%           | -0.2378         | 0.11              | 0.7445         |
| First Generation   | 0         | 305                   | 288           | 94.43%          | 17            | 5.57%           | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| African-Americans  | 1         | 196                   | 184           | 93.88%          | 12            | 6.12%           | -0.3575         | 0.28              | 0.5939         |
| Hispanic   | 1         | 21                    | 20            | 95.24%          | 1             | 4.76%           | 0.0746          | 0.00              | 0.9492         |
| Other  | 1         | 44                    | 41            | 93.18%          | 3             | 6.81%           | -0.4057         | 0.25              | 0.6197         |
| White  | 0         | 107                   | 103           | 96.26%          | 4             | 3.74%           | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Scale  | 0         |                       |               |                 |               |                 | 1.0000          |                   |                |

**Orleans Parish** – As seen in Table 13, the data in Orleans Area 4 has a 100% pass rate for students. All the other areas have pass rates above 90%. Orleans Area 2 has a highest failure rate of 9.14%. African-Americans with a Chi-square of 866.65 and a p-value <.0001 shows that this ethnicity can be said to have a significant impact on the pass rate. There were 36 students who failed in all areas of Orleans Parish. The statistics show that for the entire parish, African-Americans do not pass at the same rate as other ethnicities.

| <b>Table 13: Orleans Parish Pass Data and Analysis of Maximum Likelihood Parameter Estimates</b> |           |                       |               |                 |               |                 |                 |                   |                 |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Parameter</b>   | <b>DF</b> | <b>Total Students</b> | <b>Passed</b> | <b>% Passed</b> | <b>Failed</b> | <b>% Failed</b> | <b>Estimate</b> | <b>Chi-Square</b> | <b>P- value</b> |
| Intercept  | 1         |                       |               |                 |               |                 | 25.3040         | 402.76            | <.0001          |
| Orleans 1  | 1         | 166                   | 154           | 92.77%          | 12            | 7.23%           | -1.2585         | 1.41              | 0.2342          |
| Orleans 2  | 1         | 197                   | 179           | 90.86%          | 18            | 9.14%           | -1.4853         | 2.03              | 0.1544          |
| Orleans 3  | 0         | 180                   | 174           | 96.67%          | 6             | 3.33%           | -0.4058         | 0.14              | 0.7108          |
| Orleans 4  | 0         | 47                    | 47            | 100.00%         | 0             | 0.00%           | 0.0000          | .                 | .               |
| Not Low Income   | 1         | 25                    | 22            | 88.00%          | 3             | 12.00%          | 0.5196          | 0.69              | 0.4077          |
| Low Income   | 0         | 565                   | 532           | 94.16%          | 33            | 5.84%           | 0.0000          | .                 | .               |
| Not First Generation   | 1         | 51                    | 49            | 96.08%          | 2             | 3.92%           | 0.3832          | 0.25              | 0.6142          |
| First Generation   | 0         | 539                   | 505           | 93.69%          | 34            | 6.31%           | 0.0000          | .                 | .               |
| African-Americans  | 1         | 544                   | 510           | 93.75%          | 34            | 6.25%           | -21.6206        | 817.24            | .0001           |
| Hispanic   | 1         | 6                     | 6             | 100.00%         | 0             | 0.00%           | 0.9981          | 0.00              | 1.0000          |
| Other  | 0         | 33                    | 31            | 93.94%          | 2             | 6.06%           | -21.4726        | .                 | .               |
| White  | 0         | 7                     | 7             | 100.00%         | 0             | 0.00%           | 0.0000          | .                 | .               |
| Scale  | 0         |                       |               |                 |               |                 | 1.0000          |                   |                 |

**St. Tammany Parish** – According to Table 14, there are no differences among the two census tract areas in St. Tammany Parish. Both the passing and failing rates for each area are exactly the same, thus leading to the conclusion that it does not matter where a student lives in St. Tammany Parish because all students have the same chance of succeeding.

| <b>Table 14: St. Tammany Parish Pass Data and Analysis of Maximum Likelihood Parameter Estimates</b> |           |                       |               |                 |               |                 |                 |                  |                |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Parameter</b>   | <b>DF</b> | <b>Total Students</b> | <b>Passed</b> | <b>% Passed</b> | <b>Failed</b> | <b>% Failed</b> | <b>Estimate</b> | <b>Chi-Value</b> | <b>P-value</b> |
| Intercept  | 1         |                       |               |                 |               |                 | 3.4541          | 26.22            | <.0001         |
| St. Tammany 1  | 1         | 377                   | 367           | 97.35%          | 10            | 2.65%           | -0.0757         | 0.01             | 0.9108         |
| St. Tammany 2  | 0         | 113                   | 110           | 97.35%          | 3             | 2.65%           | 0.0000          | .                | .              |
| Not Low Income   | 1         | 132                   | 128           | 96.97%          | 4             | 3.03%           | 0.0197          | 0.00             | 0.9756         |
| Low Income   | 0         | 358                   | 349           | 97.49%          | 9             | 2.51%           | 0.0000          | .                | .              |
| Not First Generation   | 1         | 74                    | 72            | 97.30%          | 2             | 2.70%           | -0.0370         | 0.00             | 0.9640         |
| First Generation   | 0         | 416                   | 405           | 97.36%          | 11            | 2.64%           | 0.0000          | .                | .              |
| African-Americans  | 1         | 173                   | 171           | 98.84%          | 2             | 1.16%           | 1.0573          | 1.70             | 0.1917         |
| Hispanic   | 1         | 15                    | 14            | 93.33%          | 1             | 6.67%           | -0.7743         | 0.49             | 0.4853         |
| Other  | 1         | 55                    | 53            | 96.56%          | 2             | 3.64%           | -0.1164         | 0.02             | 0.8852         |
| White  | 0         | 247                   | 239           | 96.76%          | 8             | 3.24%           | 0.0000          | .                | .              |
| Scale  | 0         |                       |               |                 |               |                 | 1.0000          |                  |                |

## Graduate Rate

**For 3 different parishes** – Table 15 shows that Jefferson Parish graduates students at a higher level than those students who from Orleans (chi square = 3.62, p-value = 0.0570). Because St. Tammany Parish had a participant graduation rate of 100%, the statistics for the Parish were not included in the results. The graduation rates for Jefferson (97.22%) are greater than Orleans (92.86%) leading someone to ask if there were any other factors that might make the difference. In this case, ethnicity might be the determining factor because the statistics for the ethnicity of African-Americans are significant (chi-square = 4.31, p-value = 0.0379) when reviewing the results. Of the 13 retained, 92% were African Americans. Therefore, one may conclude that for students whose ethnicity is African-Americans might graduate at a lower rate than other ethnicities.

| <b>Table 15: Three Parish Graduation Data and Analysis of Maximum Likelihood Parameter Estimates</b> |           |                       |              |                |                |                  |                 |                   |                |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| <b>Parameter</b>   | <b>DF</b> | <b>Total Students</b> | <b>Grad.</b> | <b>% Grad.</b> | <b>Retain.</b> | <b>% Retain.</b> | <b>Estimate</b> | <b>Chi-Square</b> | <b>P-value</b> |
| Intercept  | 1         |                       |              |                |                |                  | 0.5398          | 0.35              | 0.5522         |
| Jefferson  | 1         | 144                   | 140          | 97.22%         | 4              | 2.78%            | 1.5657          | 3.62              | 0.0570         |
| Orleans  | 0         | 126                   | 117          | 92.86%         | 9              | 7.14%            | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| St. Tammany  |           | 41                    | 41           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            |                 |                   |                |
| Not Low Income   | 1         | 74                    | 73           | 98.65%         | 1              | 1.35%            | 1.6597          | 1.90              | 0.1682         |
| Low Income   | 0         | 233                   | 221          | 94.85%         | 12             | 5.15%            | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Not First Generation   | 1         | 46                    | 45           | 97.83%         | 1              | 2.17%            | .02458          | 0.05              | 0.8308         |
| First Generation   | 0         | 261                   | 249          | 95.40%         | 12             | 4.60%            | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| African-Americans  | 1         | 212                   | 202          | 95.28%         | 10             | 4.72%            | 1.8688          | 4.31              | 0.0379         |
| Hispanic   | 1         | 15                    | 15           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            | 25.4613         | 0.00              | 0.9999         |
| Other  | 1         | 24                    | 24           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            | 25.3496         | 0.00              | 0.9999         |
| White  | 0         | 56                    | 53           | 94.64%         | 3              | 5.36%            | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Scale  | 0         |                       |              |                |                |                  | 1.0000          |                   |                |



**Jefferson Parish** – Table 16 indicates that Jefferson 1, 2, and 4 have a graduation rate of 100%. When looking at the p-value and chi-square there is no significant difference in the graduating rate among these census tract areas in Jefferson Parish. However, when reviewing the graduation rates, Jefferson 3 has a lower graduation rate (91.84%).

| <b>Table 16: Jefferson Parish Graduation Data and Analysis of Maximum Likelihood Parameter Estimates</b> |           |                       |              |                |                |                  |                 |                   |                |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| <b>Parameter</b>   | <b>DF</b> | <b>Total Students</b> | <b>Grad.</b> | <b>% Grad.</b> | <b>Retain.</b> | <b>% Retain.</b> | <b>Estimate</b> | <b>Chi-Square</b> | <b>P-value</b> |
| Intercept  | 1         |                       |              |                |                |                  | 0.8220          | 0.27              | 0.6055         |
| Jefferson 1  | 1         | 32                    | 32           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            | 27.5302         | 0.00              | 0.9999         |
| Jefferson 2  | 1         | 45                    | 45           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            | 27.8189         | 1.00              | 0.9999         |
| Jefferson 3  | 0         | 49                    | 45           | 91.84%         | 4              | 8.16%            | 0.2534          | 0.04              | 0.8431         |
| Jefferson 4  | 0         | 18                    | 18           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Not Low Income   | 1         | 45                    | 44           | 97.78%         | 1              | 2.22%            | -0.5571         | 0.25              | 0.6172         |
| Low Income   | 0         | 99                    | 96           | 96.97%         | 3              | 3.03%            | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Not First Generation   | 1         | 24                    | 23           | 95.83%         | 1              | 4.17%            | 0.0791          | 0.00              | 0.9537         |
| First Generation   | 0         | 120                   | 117          | 97.50%         | 3              | 2.50%            | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| African-Americans  | 1         | 80                    | 78           | 97.50%         | 2              | 2.50%            | 2.2775          | 3.72              | 0.0536         |
| Hispanic   | 1         | 13                    | 13           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            | 26.5174         | 0.00              | 1.0000         |
| Other  | 1         | 20                    | 20           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            | 1.5304          | 1.14              | 0.2861         |
| White  | 0         | 31                    | 29           | 93.55%         | 2              | 6.45%            | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Scale  | 0         |                       |              |                |                |                  | 1.0000          |                   |                |

**Orleans Parish** -- There is no significant difference among graduation rates when reviewing the p-values of each of the census tract areas. As Table 17 highlights, even though the overall graduation rates of participants varied, the graduation rates in Orleans Parish range within 5.74 points. For ethnicity, African-Americans with a Chi-square of 4.03 and a p-value of 0.0446 indicate that students of this ethnicity have a different graduation rate than their peers. 100% of the students retained were African-Americans.

| <b>Table 17: Orleans Parish Graduation Data and Analysis of Maximum Likelihood Parameter Estimates</b> |           |                       |              |                |                |                  |                 |                   |                |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| <b>Parameter</b>   | <b>DF</b> | <b>Total Students</b> | <b>Grad.</b> | <b>% Grad.</b> | <b>Retain.</b> | <b>% Retain.</b> | <b>Estimate</b> | <b>Chi-Square</b> | <b>P-value</b> |
| Intercept  | 1         |                       |              |                |                |                  | -1.7047         | 0.69              | 0.4053         |
| Orleans 1  | 1         | 47                    | 45           | 95.74%         | 2              | 4.26%            | 1.7047          | 1.32              | 0.2501         |
| Orleans 2  | 1         | 30                    | 27           | 90.00%         | 3              | 10.00%           | 0.1054          | 0.01              | 0.9326         |
| Orleans 3  | 1         | 38                    | 35           | 92.11%         | 3              | 7.89%            | 0.4769          | 0.15              | 0.7002         |
| Orleans 4  | 0         | 11                    | 10           | 90.91%         | 1              | 9.09%            | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Not Low Income   | 1         | 21                    | 21           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            | 24.8569         | 0.00              | 0.9998         |
| Low Income   | 0         | 105                   | 96           | 91.43%         | 9              | 8.57%            | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Not First Generation   | 1         | 16                    | 16           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            | 22.5401         | 0.00              | 0.9998         |
| First Generation   | 0         | 110                   | 101          | 91.82%         | 9              | 8.18%            | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| African-Americans  | 1         | 118                   | 110          | 93.22%         | 8              | 6.78%            | 3.4965          | 4.03              | 0.0446         |
| Hispanic   | 1         | 2                     | 2            | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            | 27.5931         | 0.00              | 1.0000         |
| Other  | 1         | 2                     | 2            | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            | 27.0341         | 0.00              | 0.9999         |
| White  | 0         | 4                     | 3            | 75.00%         | 1              | 25.0%            | 0.0000          | .                 | .              |
| Scale  | 0         |                       |              |                |                |                  | 1.0000          |                   |                |

**St. Tammany Parish** – Table 18 gives the demographic data of the 37 graduates from St. Tammany Parish. All students graduated; therefore, statistics for St. Tammany Parish were not run because.

| <b>Table 18: St. Tammany Parish Graduation Data</b> |           |                       |              |                |                |                  |
|---|-----------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| <b>Parameter</b>                                    | <b>DF</b> | <b>Total Students</b> | <b>Grad.</b> | <b>% Grad.</b> | <b>Retain.</b> | <b>% Retain.</b> |
| Intercept   | 1         |                       |              |                |                |                  |
| St. Tammany 1                                       | 1         | 37                    | 37           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            |
| St. Tammany 2                                       | 1         | 0                     | 0            | 0.00%          | 0              | 0.00%            |
| Not Low Income                                      | 1         | 8                     | 8            | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            |
| Low Income  | 0         | 29                    | 29           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            |
| Not First Generation                                | 1         | 6                     | 6            | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            |
| First Generation                                    | 0         | 31                    | 31           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            |
| African-Americans                                   | 1         | 14                    | 14           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            |
| Hispanic  | 1         | 0                     | 0            | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            |
| Other   | 1         | 2                     | 2            | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            |
| White   | 0         | 21                    | 21           | 100.00%        | 0              | 0.00%            |
| Scale   | 0         |                       |              |                |                |                  |

In conclusion, our research confirms that the place where a student lives plays a role in both pass and graduation rates. In reviewing the statistics, students attending St. Tammany Parish schools, along with Jefferson Parish (especially Jefferson Area 4), have a better chance of passing from one grade to the next and graduating from high school than do students from Orleans Parish. It is apparent from this study that African-Americans students do not succeed at the same rate as their non-African-American peers.

## **Chapter 5**

### ***Conclusion***

A successful person is in part defined by the amount and quality of education they receive. Students have difficulty navigating alone through the “who,” “what,” “when,” “where” and “why” of the progression from elementary through high school to postsecondary education. Along with progressing from one level of education to another, students are faced with family and environmental issues that complicate charting a successful path to the future.

The focus of this study is on three Talent Search programs located at the University of New Orleans and whose participants are from the tri-parish area of Jefferson, Orleans, and St. Tammany Parish. In order to be a participant the students must from low-income and first-generation family backgrounds within those geographic areas. The results of this study were not unexpected due to the current status of educational challenges in Orleans and Jefferson parishes. The focus of the thesis was to find out if location was a predictor for success in addition to other factors such as income level, educational attainment status, and ethnicity of students. The findings in this research support the prediction that location and ethnicity play a role in passing from one grade to another and in graduation rates. Conversely, of the data analyzed in this limited study showed no significant effect between income level and educational attainment levels in measuring student success.

The study shows that where students live impacts their graduation rates. St. Tammany Parish has a 100% graduation rate. The study further shows that ethnicity impacts graduation rates in parishes where the category of African-Americans is significant (Chi-square = 866.65, p-value <.0001), e.g. Orleans Parish.

The significance of ethnicity as a factor in predicting graduation rates would be better demonstrated by expanding this study to include students in the Talent Search program versus those who are not in the program. Now, the question is, since we know that location matters and ethnicity counts, what can be learned from this information? This information can now be used by the University of New Orleans' Talent Search Programs as well as other programs to assist them in better serving students from Orleans, Jefferson, and St. Tammany parishes. The programs might then place services in different schools and provide more concentration in those areas where passing or graduation rates are not as high as they should be.

There is a disparity between the success of students in a predominantly white parish (St. Tammany) and less measurable success in the two parishes with more minority students (Jefferson and Orleans). Therefore, funding should be allocated to minority students because they have not been as successful as their white counterparts, precisely why the program was originally created. Additional study should be given to exploring the relationship between minority students and their socio-economic level in achieving academic success.

The overall conclusion which can be drawn from this study is that geography plays a significant role in determining the academic success of students. As suggested earlier, future studies must include a control group of students who did not have Talent Search program support in contrast to those participating in our programs. Resultant graduation rates should reflect greater academic success among those students served by our programs.

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