TRiO Student Support Services celebrates summer & fall 2016 graduates

BAYTOWN, TX — When Jarvis Booker joined the TRiO Student Support Services program at Lee College, he was looking for an organization or activity to help beef up his resume. Instead, he found a new family and discovered new dreams on the way to earning this fall associate of applied science degrees in Process Technology and Manufacturing Engineering Technology.

“It allowed me to enrich my character and develop determination, motivation and goals I never even had before,” said Booker, one of more than a dozen TRiO graduates from the summer and fall 2016 semesters honored at a special ceremony held Dec. 15, 2016, in the Rundell Hall Conference Center.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the TRiO Student Support Services program at Lee College offers a range of assistance to help low-income students, first-generation college students, and students with disabilities progress through the academic pipeline — from financial aid, registration, graduation and transfer assistance, to individualized education plans, individual and group tutoring and student success workshops.

“It was more than just help with registration and enrolling in the right classes. I learned things I never thought I would learn,” Booker said. “I received personal counseling in a more intimate setting. I learned to trust my advisers because they know what’s best for me. They want people to work hard, and it makes you a better person to know what you can accomplish.”

At the ceremony, each graduate received a customized plaque in recognition of successful completion of their chosen associate degree or certificate program. They also had the opportunity to award a special certificate to an instructor, staff member or loved one whose support made a difference during their time on campus.

“You have accomplished so much and demonstrated academically and scholastically that you are a college graduate,” Pres. Dr. Dennis Brown said. “You now have the tools, knowledge and training to be very successful. Look back and think about those in your family, friends and community who you can now help direct, guide and advise. Help someone like someone helped you.”

Treva Brown-Askey, a former TRiO participant and faculty member who chairs the Developmental Education Division at the college, also urged graduates to continue giving back to their community.

“Your journey doesn’t have to stop here,” Brown-Askey said. “You have the opportunity to do great things and the future is really yours. You have power. You are the example. We challenge you to take your experience to others. Keep moving forward.”

Brittnie Broglin came to Student Support Services shortly after losing her mother, struggling to make it through her first semester at Lee College while also working two jobs. Now, after earning a second associate degree in E-Business Web Development, she feels ready to step into a bright new future in the information technology field.

“They were there to support me, helping me transition after my mother passed and keeping me on track with the classes I needed,” Broglin said. “I feel wonderful. After all

the studying and working, graduation feels like a burden has been lifted. I can breathe. To anyone considering TRiO, I would say ‘just try.’ It can only help you.”