



Kapkeo Souriya offered his thanks to the TRIO programs and many of the people in attendance.

the sisters would have experienced the tutoring, textbooks, and counseling that each received while being a TRIO participant. Phourasami recalled how the Student Support Services and McNair Scholars Program put her and three of her sisters on the path toward graduate school.

During the video biography, it was noted that four of the sisters had earned master's degrees and that Phourasami is finishing a doctorate degree in May 2019. As Phourasami concluded her remarks, she became emotional. Being driven from their home in Laos due to the war, coming to a foreign land, separated by an ocean, not knowing the language or American customs must have been one of the hardest things a person could endure. For this, the audience

The audience was standing on their feet cheering for what seemed like a minute or more. As the evening's honoree stepped up to the microphone, he felt his legs shake. He had not considered that the 200 people in attendance would find his life story so compelling.

Kapkeo Souriya, his wife Sisana, and their five daughters (Vannapha, Vanphasong, Phourasami, Panomsone, and

of and heard stories about.

As he spoke, offering his thanks to the TRIO programs and many of the people in attendance, he realized that his family had journeyed down a path that led to riches far greater than money—his daughters had all graduated from college. Education, he said, was important to his family. Therefore, after high school, he and his wife hoped that the daughters would go on to college.

Following Kapkeo's remarks, Phourasami shared her thoughts with the audience. She thanked her older sister, Vannapha, for guiding the rest of the sisters to Student Support Services. Because if it had not been for her, none of

and, Lorene Berg, assistant director of Upward Bound Math Science Center. Earlier in the evening, Kiana Knolland, former Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP participant, was honored as well. In addition, Provost Richard Muma, Ph.D., Vice President for Diversity and Community Engagement Marche Fleming-Randle, Ph.D., Mayor Jeff Longwell, and Colvin addressed the audience.