

**Profile of  
Bee Vang  
Program Director, Upward Bound, University of Wisconsin–River Falls  
2018 Regents Diversity Award Individual Recipient**

**Highlights from nomination materials:**

- Promoted to director in 2011 after joining UW-River Falls' Upward Bound program in 2010 as program advisor; in the position of director, hires, supervises, trains, and evaluates one full-time academic advisor, 10 part-time student workers, and eight part-time instructors.
- As Principal Investigator, successfully renewed Federal TRIO Upward Bound grant twice (2012-17 and 2017-22) through a competitive grant process by the U.S. Department of Education; the program helps prepare low-income and first-generation high school students for college.
- Serves a diverse cohort of students, modeling self-advocacy, hard work, and networking; directly impacts the lives of nearly 75 students and their families every year through tutoring and academic skill building, social and cultural activities, college and career awareness, and personal and academic counseling.
- Helps students at UW-River Falls' partner school Washington Technology Magnet School, an urban secondary school with a diverse student population of over 2,100 students; over 90% of the students receive free or reduced price lunch, over 90% are students of color, and yet the graduation rate is 93%; through Ms. Vang's commitment to make sure every student is successful, 100% of the students in the Upward Bound program at Washington Technology have been accepted to post-secondary education each year.
- Promotes partnerships between Upward Bound and the UW-River Falls' six-week summer program; the McNair program; TRIO Student Support Services; the IceCube project, in which teachers and researchers with Antarctic field experience interact with high school students; STEMteach, a program to allow student teachers to interact with high school youth; and the UW-River Falls teacher education department.
- Selects student designates to attend the National Student Leadership Congress held annually in Washington, D.C., to cultivate civic leadership and to speak to Congress on Capitol Hill.
- Recipient of University of Wisconsin System Outstanding Woman of Color Award in Education (2014).

**In the words of one of Bee Vang's Upward Bound students:**

- "Since the day I joined Upward Bound until now, I feel like I have changed...[N]ow I think more like an adult, think deeper, and think more about my future."

**In the words of colleagues:**

- "Ms. Vang has functioned with exceptional dedication to the mission of Upward Bound and a remarkable level of effectiveness in engagement with the high school students recruited to her program. I have attended Upward Bound events at Washington Technology Magnet High School and have interacted with the students and families that have benefited from this program. I have received consistently high praise from these participants to the value of the Upward Bound program, in general, and to the specific role Ms. Vang plays in coordinating the Upward Bound activities and offering the students her advising and mentoring skills."—*Randy Zimmermann, Director, Outreach and Continuing Education, UW-River Falls*
- "I am often referring faculty grant writers to Ms. Vang who is always happy to consider new partnerships. Such partnerships increase the impact of the Upward Bound program since there is opportunity for the campus community to join in working with the diverse students that the program serves." —*Diane Bennett, Director of Grants and Research, UW-River Falls*