Upward Bound students present climate change videos Friday at TSJC’s Massari

High school students from Trinidad State’s Math Science Upward Bound program are holding a free screening, open to the public, of short climate change films they created from 3-4 p.m. on Friday at the Massari Theater on the Trinidad State campus.

The event is part of this year’s Upward Bound program at Trinidad State, which provides underserved students an intensive college experience focused on math and science. Trinidad State has also built partnerships with the University of Colorado Boulder that provides opportunities for student engagement both here in Trinidad and in Boulder. The film project is titled “Lens on Climate Change,” and CU Boulder believes the project “engages middle and high school students in film production, documenting the effects of climatic and environmental changes on their lives and in their communities.”

To create the films that will be shown Friday, students spent time both in Boulder and here in Trinidad learning about climate change and filmmaking. Students are mentored by Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences graduate students and Colorado Film School videographers throughout the production of their videos.

“We had 12 students we took to Boulder the week

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Community and a group from Gallup (N.M.) focused on their community’s water supply and how their lakes are drying up,” said Massarotti. “It’s really a good avenue for students to be able to work with science and members from that field and they’re able to work at becoming an active part in bringing awareness to a concern.”

With the Trinidad group here, the 15 students are grouped with one team being from the local area, another team from the Las Cruces area and a third team from both the Las Cruces and Gallup areas.

The Upward Bound program is celebrating its twenty-fifth summer on the Trinidad State Campus. Students accepted to the program either meet income requirements, or are likely to be first generation college attendees. Students are also encouraged have an interest in pursuing education and a career in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fields. Right now the program, directed by Judy MacLaren, is serving 86 students.

“It gives them a little boost,” said Massarotti. “High schools don’t necessarily have the resources we do for student over the summer. These kids take classes from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. everyday and live on campus. It’s a free program for them and this year we have seven mentors that are current college students. Six of those mentors are alumni that came through the program when they were in high school and now they are pursuing college science majors.

“For the students they get to take electives that are really intensive in math and science and get the opportunity to do great things like the trip to CU and trips to Denver. This type of education allows them to see what’s beyond. It gets them out of their comfort zone and gives them the resources to be successful as well.”

Students with the Math Science Upward Bound program at Trinidad State hard at work.

Photos courtesy of Greg Boyce / Trinidad State