

PAULA J. MARTIN BIOGRAPHY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR of TRiO PROGRAMS
HARLEM CENTER FOR EDUCATION
AEEE PRESIDENT 1983 - 84

Ms. Paula J. Martin was born in New York City and has lived in the City all her life. Her mother, Frances C. Martin, instilled in her the importance of education at an early age. She briefly ventured out of New York City when she attended college at Syracuse University for four years to get her Bachelor's degree in Psychology. However, she returned to New York to get her Master's degree in Developmental Psychology at Teacher's College, Columbia University and has stayed in New York ever since. While enrolled in graduate school, Ms. Martin stumbled across what was an Upward Bound program being hosted by Columbia University and applied for a summer teaching job with the program. She was fortunate to get the position and at the end of the summer was offered the full time position of Academic Counselor. After one year, the gentleman who was Assistant Director decided to leave to pursue a career in music and Ms. Martin was offered the position, which she gladly accepted. Eight years later, and with the addition of a Talent Search program, the Project Director got promoted within the University and Ms. Martin assumed the position of Project Director for Upward Bound and Talent Search. In 1985, after 12 years with Columbia University, Ms. Martin left to become Executive Director of a non-profit organization that had a Talent Search program. Ms. Martin has been with that organization, Harlem Center for Education for 25 years. During that time period the organization has had a Community Technology Center and currently has two Talent Search programs and an Educational Opportunity Center program, which are TRIO programs.

Ms. Martin has received recognition along the way for her leadership and training skills in that she was the first female President of the Association for Equality and Excellence in Education (AEEE); Chair of the Finance and Personnel Committees for what was then the National Council of Educational Opportunity Associations, NCEOA (now known as Council for Opportunity in Education, COE); served on the Board of the NCEOA for several years; worked as a trainer of TRIO staffs for NCEOA, SAEOPP, University of Idaho and University of Washington. She received the Award of Excellence from her regional association, AEEE, twice as well as other awards.

In addition, Ms. Martin has been active in her community over the years in that she was Secretary of the local Community Planning Board 9 for three years; and is currently Treasurer for the Board of the non-profit ITSOC (In the Spirit of Children, Inc.).

Ms. Martin has worked in TRIO for over 36 years and has seen many of her former students achieve and become successful teachers, lawyers, doctors, politicians, ministers, principals and so on. Work with the students has been more than gratifying and rewarding over these many years.