

THE PILLAR

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE TRIO SSS COMMUNITY

"Helping Students Realize Their Full Potential"

April 2021
ISSUE

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Dreams
COME TRUE.

Student Spotlight — Odalis Castro



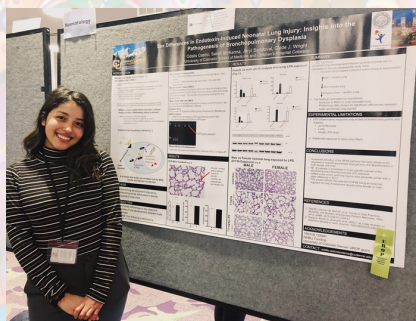
The TRIO Student Support Services program would like to spotlight Odalis Castro in this month's newsletter. Odalis will be graduating this semester with a Bachelor of Science degree in Bioengineering and a minor in Biology. Her short-term goals are to graduate this spring 2021 and read a new book every month. Her long-term goal is to ultimately serve a low-income population in urban areas and be involved in health policy. She noted, "I believe healthcare providers must be involved in healthcare legislation and get a seat at the table to advocate for patient care. For that reason, I will be applying to medical school to research, provide care, and policy work." Her hobbies include long-distance running, strength training, exploring coffee shops around town, snowboarding, and finding and listening to podcasts.

Odalis was asked to reflect on her college experience and she shared that her college experience has allowed her to pursue various career opportunities and find intersections between each of those experiences. She says, "I am involved in scientific research and internships in the medical device industry. Those experiences have allowed me to build connections both in academia and industry. Ultimately, these opportunities have allowed me to build meaningful mentor/mentee relationships. Outside of academics, I am actively involved with non-profit organizations around the city that focus on health policy, equity, and providing care. Within these organizations, I have taken on numerous leadership opportunities. I currently serve as the Interpreting Workgroup team at the DAWN Clinic, where I oversee a group of volunteer interpreters who dedicate their time to free healthcare services. I am also a member of the Coalition for Immigrant Health at the Center for Health Progress, where we explore policy and find ways to improve health coverage for immigrants in Colorado." Her favorite memory in college by far was traveling and study abroad. She said, "Studying abroad can seem daunting, especially when there are financial constraints. However, CU Denver offers many travel scholarships and grants to fund your study abroad experience! I was fortunate enough to receive the World Within Your Reach Study Abroad Scholarship, an all-expenses covered scholarship that made it possible for me to travel to Guatemala. In Guatemala, a group of engineering students and I guided local high school students through the engineering process and designed low-cost global health technologies. Our team developed a low-cost irrigation system that focused on mitigating potential mosquito breeding grounds near homes. A few months after returning from Guatemala, our team decided to compete in the RICE 360 Tenth Annual Undergraduate Global Health Technologies Design Competition at Rice University in Houston, TX. The competition was held virtually, and we were named semifinalists in this competition! Truly a fantastic experience!"

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Spotlight Continued — Odalis Castro

Odalis's biggest challenge has been balancing non-academic activities while performing well in her courses. She notes, "I have definitely gotten better at managing my time, but it was a significant challenge at the beginning of my college trajectory." Odalis wished someone would have told her that college is really the time to explore career interests and to not be afraid to explore areas outside of your major. She stated, "Take that music class, even if it's outside your major!" When asked how TRIO has helped her, Odalis noted, "There will be days when you feel tired or need someone to talk to after taking an exam. I always like scheduling my peer-mentor meetings and meetings with Daniela around a week that I know will be stressful and need that academic support. It is nice to step into the TRIO office (or on Zoom) to talk to these fantastic mentors!" If Odalis were to win a million dollars, she would probably sleep the whole day knowing she can afford to take a day off from work.



She leaves us with her favorite quote, "Enthusiasm is common. Endurance is rare." - Angela Duckworth

"The road to a career in medicine and science is not easy, and I always keep this quote in mind to remind myself that it will all be worth it."

Our office wishes great success for Odalis in her future endeavors.

Student Spotlight — Amy Hernandez



TRIO Student Support Services would also like to highlight Amy Hernandez in this month's newsletter. Amy has been a TRIO SSS participant since fall of 2018. She will be graduating this spring semester 2021 with a Bachelor of Science in Biology. She will be taking the dental admissions exam (DAT) in May 2021 and applying to dental school in July 2021. Amy's biggest challenge in earning her degree was her spring 2020 semester. It was challenging because of the switch from in-person classes to remote classes. She stated, "I live with my entire family, which I love, but it makes it very difficult to stay focused when the switch happens so fast." Overall, her experience in college has been great. She noted, "I met amazing people who taught me many lessons about life, careers, friendships and more. I was involved in student government, specifically in organizing events, student outreach, and it was one of the best experiences at CU Denver. It was one of my favorite experiences at this institution." As for her long term goal, she will be moving into her own apartment/ house in summer 2022.

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Spotlight Continued — Amy Hernandez



Amy's favorite memory in college was volunteering at the Grand Canyon three years ago through CU Denver Alternative Breaks. This is a program that offers students an opportunity to go on a trip at a low cost where they can participate in a service learning project helping communities in need. Her hobbies and interests include painting during her free time, watching new shows, and movies. Amy was asked, "What is one thing you wish you were told when you started college?" She answered, "I wish I were told that there are many resources that are genuinely there to help you succeed. I was fortunate enough to be a part of the TRIO program early on in my college career. My Biology I professor introduced me to TRIO, and I am very grateful for it." She goes on to say, "TRIO has helped me by keeping me on track



with my goals and aspirations. Also, they have been very helpful when it comes to applying for scholarships, internships, and other programs. All the TRIO staff and the mentors are one of the best resources I have had." If Amy won a million dollars, the first thing she would do is open a scholarship at CU Denver. She stated, "There are so many students that deserve scholarships and do not have the opportunity to have them." Amy leaves us with her favorite quote, "Never stop learning because life never stops teaching – Unknown." We wish Amy success in her future endeavors.

Student Spotlight — Natali Cadena

The TRIO SSS Team is also happy to highlight Natali Cadena. She has been an active member of the program since fall 2017. She will be graduating with a BSBA in Marketing and Information Systems with a minor in Spanish. She was accepted into the BSBA/MS 4+1 program and will transition into graduate courses this summer to complete her MS in Marketing.

When asked to reflect on her undergraduate experience at CU Denver, Natali mentioned that she had been nervous she would not have the "traditional college experience" when entering college. She went on to say that her experience has been more than she could have hoped for and she is happy with her time at CU Denver. There was one thought that resonated with her during her four years, which was "What you put in is what you get out." In her first semester, she put herself out there and got involved on campus. She took advantage of work-study opportunities, attended workshops and events, connected with diverse communities and clubs, and applied to several leadership programs. Natali stated, "If I had not stepped out of my comfort zone to make a home for myself at CU Denver, I would not have created all of the amazing relationships and experiences that I have." When asked how the TRIO SSS program has helped her navigate her college experience, Natali stated, "My amazing TRIO advisor, Henry, has worked with me throughout all four years and he has always been a mentor I can count on to advocate for me. He has always supported me and provided so many amazing resources to reach my personal, professional, and academic goals." She would advise other TRIO members to take time to go through the resources that are provided because they are very helpful.



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Spotlight Continued — Natali Cadena



Her journey did come with some challenges. She noted that she had a challenging time figuring out what she wanted to do with her major. Overtime, her interests changed a lot based on her experiences and moments with peers and mentors. Consequently, she changed her major, added onto her degree and turned down other additions to her degree. She stated, "Difficulty with these kinds of decisions cross the mind of many students and is not something that can always be controlled. This had a big impact on my motivation, academic and professional decisions, and financial stability." When asked about one thing she wished she was told when starting college, Natali noted that one thing comes to her mind frequently: she wished someone had told her to enjoy her time in college more rather than stress about it. Even though she knows she is a worrywart, she wished she had taken more time for herself, family, and friends instead of solely focusing all her time and effort into her classes. She noted, "It is obviously very important to make school a priority, but I do wish that I had made more time to celebrate myself and others around me more than I did."

Her absolute favorite memory in college was during her study abroad program in Spain in the summer of 2019. She attended a university in Valladolid, Spain and learned Spanish. During this experience, she learned so much about the language and culture from the professors as well as her host family, whom she loves. She created strong relationships with other amazing CU Denver students and other students from universities across the U.S. that she still connects with to this day. The program also offered excursions to different cities in Spain to explore the food and rich history. Natali stated, "I even took advantage of traveling to other European countries (France and Greece) with some of my classmates after the program. These are memories I will never forget!"

Prior to the pandemic, her hobbies and interests included traveling and attending concerts. As we move through the pandemic, Natali has learned how to take care of plants and is enjoying cooking new foods. Her short-term goals within the year include completing at least one more internship and then begin applying for full-time positions. She will continue her studies at the CU Denver Business School taking marketing graduate courses. She will prioritize being a full-time student and completing an internship to strengthen her resume to better prepare herself as a potential full-time employee. A long-term goal of hers within the next few years is to continue learning about marketing and management practices to potentially begin a marketing agency that will take on strategic marketing projects for a variety of companies.

Her favorite quote by Andrea Dykstra is "In order to love who you are, you cannot hate the experiences that shaped you." This quote resonates with Natali because overtime she has learned as a woman of color that it is important for her to find the best parts within all her past experiences to find the positivity in current and future life events, which she feels are essentially personal learning paths. She stated, "In connection to this, it is important to love oneself to most effectively accomplish goals that have been set. Loving yourself is the first step in loving your life!" If she won a million dollars, she would use it to travel with her family and contribute to organizations that support underserved communities. Traveling has always been important to her and being able to explore and experience different places and cultures with her family would be a dream come true. She mentioned, "I have also spent a lot more time within the last year educating myself more about underserved communities and it has become important to me to continue learning more and giving back when I am able to." The TRIO SSS program wishes Natali continued success in her life!



Earth Day

Before the 1970s, there were no laws, regulations, or Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate air pollution or quality standards of water. It was typical to see black clouds in the sky and for companies to dump waste into a body of water.

To fight for these issues, Senator Gaylord Nelson established Earth Day in 1970. He wanted to promote awareness of environmental issues.¹ Due to the impact, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was established on December 2, 1970.¹ The purpose of the EPA is to protect human health and the environment.³



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

Through research, education, and voting, there have been many environmental legislations passed including the Water Quality Improvement Act, Clean Air Act, Endangered Species Act, and Toxic Substances Control Act.

This year will mark 51 years of observing Earth Day. Earth Day recognition is on April 22nd of every year. Many people find ways to participate in Earth Day. Others celebrate all year because of the impact it has on the planet.

There are many ways we can participate on Earth Day. If you're unsure how to participate, you can always visit [EarthDay.org](https://www.earthday.org)²

Here are some ways you can participate on Earth Day or everyday:

- Plant a tree
- Use a refillable water
- Educate yourself on the climate crisis
- Recycle
- Pick up trash when you're out
- Buy reusable bags

References

1. EPA. (2020). EPA history: earth day. <https://www.epa.gov/history/epa-history-earth-day>
2. Earth Day. (n.d.). Earth day every day. <https://www.earthday.org>
3. EPA (2020). Our mission and what we do. <https://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/our-mission-and-what-we-do>

Carol Combs | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

Kudos

Have an accomplishment? Please tell TRIO about it.
Please send KUDOS to Henry Ornelas, TRIO SSS Program Manager.
Click [HERE](#) to send him a message!

- ***Hissein Wade has secured an internship with Inspirato in IT Technology for summer 2021.***

CONGRATULATIONS and great job on your hard work. Keep it up TRIO students and staff!

Happy Thai New Year!

"It's the most wonderful time of the year." Songkran, Thai New Year, is the holiday that everybody enjoys. Songkran will be from April 13 to April 15 this year. It's the day where people can have a long day off, visit their family, and celebrate the holiday by playing with water. Songkran is celebrated in Thailand, Lao, Cambodia, Myanmar, and many other places. In this article, we will mainly focus on Thailand.



Songkran in Thailand derives from the ancient Indian Festival of Makar Sankranti. This translates into passing the old year to a new one. Songkran is one of the important events in the Buddhist calendar. During Songkran, Buddha images are bathed, and younger people show respect to monks and elders by sprinkling water over their hands. Events include water throwing and a variety of performances. At the same time, there is an array of traditional foods where you will never go hungry.



So How do people celebrate Songkran? Water fighting is what Songkran is famous for. While it is not just water playing in Thailand, many people will go back and visit their loved ones and celebrate their new year with the people they love. Songkran is about people coming together to celebrate the culture, spend quality time with their family and friends.



Patitta Banjongwit | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

Quick, Easy, Tasty Rosemary Chicken Recipe

One of my favorite meals that is healthy, tasty, and quick is my rosemary chicken recipe. I usually have a salad or asparagus to go with it. Enjoy!

Ingredients

- 5 chicken thighs, bone in and skin on
- 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon coarse ground black pepper
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil



Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.
2. Mix all the ingredients together and place chicken, skin side up in a 9x13 baking pan.
3. Roast for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown.

Reference:

<https://dinnerthendessert.com/baked-rosemary-chicken/>

Justin Shrader | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor



Sports News

There are a lot of ways for people to relieve stress, relax and enjoy their leisure time. One way a lot of people do this is by watching or playing sports. Whether it is playing, listening, predicting, betting, or watching, many people take the time out of their lives to enjoy sports. In a world that seems to have limitless restrictions on what people can and cannot do, sports have always been a get away from the struggles and issues people endure and with the recent pandemic, the lens has widened on the world of sports. What better way to keep yourself busy and entertained by keeping up with the latest sports news that occur? Below are a few big-time sports news that have happened during these past months.

Tiger Woods Car Crash:

In late February, the sports world was stunned to learn that the golf legend Tiger Woods endured a terrible single car accident. According to Golf Digest, "Woods suffered comminuted open fractures" to both the upper and lower portions of his tibia and fibula in his right leg, as well as damage to the ankle bones and trauma to the muscle and soft tissue of the leg". The soon to hall of famer's accident was a shock to the world as one of the golfing worlds giants has been taken out of the game. Golfer's participating in the WCG- Workday Championship wore black and red I honor of Tiger as he continues to recover from his injuries.



Denver Broncos Release Philip Lindsay:



It was devastating news to Broncos fans all over to see their hometown running back be released. As of March 18th, 2021, the Denver Broncos and Philip Lindsay both agreed to part ways. For most Bronco Fans this is with a heavy heart as Lindsay is a hometown kid, attending South High School and playing running back for CU Boulder it seemed only right that Lindsay should play for his hometown team. Although, rushing for two consecutive 1,000 yard seasons, Lindsay has struggled with injuries and in addition with the signings of running backs Melvin Gordon and Mike Boone it is clear that the Broncos front office has plans and Lindsay isn't a part of it.

Michael Martinez | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

World Autism Awareness Day

The 14th annual World Autism Awareness day is on April 2nd this year. Autism groups around the world commemorate this day every year to raise awareness and acceptance of people with Autism. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 out of every 68 children in the United States has Autism or is affected by an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This figure is up nearly 30% from 1 in 88 just two years ago. Autism is a spectrum disorder characterized by complex developmental disorders of the brain. Intellectual disability, motor coordination, and attention are some of the other areas affected by ASD.

Previously known as autistic disorder, childhood disintegrative disorder, pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS), and Asperger syndrome, the various degrees of Autism were referred to as an autistic disorder, childhood disintegrative disorder, pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS), and Asperger syndrome. Although the cause of Autism is unknown, it is thought to begin early in a child's brain development, with signs and symptoms emerging as the child grows older. We urge you to learn more about Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders by taking a few minutes to do so.

Alexa Dominguez | TRIO SSS Office Assistant

Director's Corner



Dear SSS Participants,

I cannot believe April is here or that spring semester is nearly over. I hope you are doing well and thriving in your academic and personal lives. This past month, I have experienced emotions ranging from hope about COVID vaccines and returning to campus this fall semester to sadness over the mass shootings in Atlanta and Boulder. If you, too, have been impacted emotionally by these senseless acts of violence, I hope that you have reached out to our counseling center for support. While we're not therapists, please know that the SSS team is here for you. Please reach out to us if we can help you in any way.

Before you head into Spring Break and finals, I want to remind you about upcoming SSS Book Scholarship deadlines. In order to be eligible for the Fall 2021 Book Scholarship, you must complete one skill-building workshop, coordinator meeting, and peer mentor meetings by Friday, April 16th. The remaining coordinator meeting and financial literacy requirement must be met by Friday, May 7th.

If you're looking for something to do over Spring Break, please consider joining us for Yoga with TRIO on April 21st at noon. Finally, you will be receiving a link for our Spring Satisfaction Survey in the coming days; please take 5 minutes to give us your feedback. As we begin to plan our return to campus, we want to hear from you! Specifically, we would like to know what aspects of virtual programming and services work and what kind of topics you would like us to address through our workshops. Help us better serve you by completing this short survey.

Be safe and be well.

Sonia Valencia
Director, TRIO SSS & McNair

National Financial Literacy Month

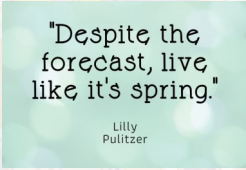





As a nation, we celebrate Financial Literacy Month in April. I believe we can all agree that money is important. Someone once told me when I was younger that the biggest financial investment in my life would be retirement. I had no clue how to start a retirement plan or even knew what a 401K plan was. Additionally, I was unaware of the potential dangers of credit card debt. As I reflect back on my experiences, I probably should have asked more financial questions and looked for opportunities to acquire the skills and knowledge to manage my money better. I encourage you to attend a financial literacy session this month to broaden your knowledge on budgeting, credit, retirement, taxes, identity theft, insurance, paying for college, or understanding student loans. *Check-out the financial literacy sessions offered in this month's newsletter.*



Did you know that one of the pillars of the [CU Denver Wellness & Recreation Services](#) is centered around Financial Wellness? The program strives to provide resources, guidance, and activities to help students manage their money and build healthy financial habits towards stability. You can find information including financial wellness sessions [here](#).

Henry R. Ornelas | TRIO SSS Program Manager

April Workshop Calendar

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
WORKSHOP EVALUATIONS Please be sure to complete the workshop evaluation after the workshop. You can access the form at: http://bit.ly/2Wtio87			1 ¹ Stress Less 5:00 pm—6:00 pm ——— ² Student Financial Services Financial Literacy: Understanding Federal Student and Parent Loans 5:30 pm—6:30 pm	2 
5 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> Mission Statement The University of Colorado Denver TRIO Student Support Services Program is a holistic student development program that is dedicated to helping each student reach his or her full academic potential. </div>	6 ³ TRIO Financial Literacy: Please Don't Take My Money 3:30 pm—4:30 pm	7  ⁴ Gender Identity & Leadership 3:30 pm—4:30 pm	8 ⁵ Wellness & Recreation Financial Literacy: Preparing for Life After Graduation 11:00 am—12:30 pm ——— ¹ Managing Your Mood 5:00 pm—6:00 pm ——— ² Student Financial Services Financial Literacy: Financial Fitness— Budgeting and Saving for college and beyond 5:30 pm—6:30 pm	9 ⁶ Different Types of Leadership 9:00 am—10:00 am 
12 <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Now <input type="checkbox"/> Later <input type="checkbox"/> Someday <input type="checkbox"/> Soon ⁶Now or Later: Procrastination 2:00 pm—3:00 pm </div>	13 ⁷ General Study Skills for New Students 10:00 am—11:00 am 	14 ⁵ Wellness & Recreation Financial Literacy: Impulse Spending & Money Mindset 11:00 am—12:00 pm ——— ⁷ Discover New Learning Strategies 12:30 pm—1:30 pm ——— ⁴ Exploring Your Relationship With Risk 3:30 pm—4:30 pm	15 ¹ Peace of Mind 5:00 pm—6:00 pm ——— ² Student Financial Services Financial Literacy: Financial Fitness - Building and Maintaining your Credit and Credit Score 5:30 pm—6:30 pm	16 APRIL FINANCIAL LITERACY MONTH 
19 ⁶ Pandemic Talk 10:00 am—11:00 am	20 ⁶ Professional Effective Networking 3:00 pm—4:00 pm	21 ⁴ Followership: Exploring Roles as a Leader from the Middle 3:30 pm—4:30 pm	22 ² Student Financial Services Financial Literacy: Ballin' on a Budget 5:30 pm—6:30 pm	23
26	27 ⁷ Ace My Tests 10:00 am—11:00 am ——— ⁵ Wellness & Recreation Financial Literacy: Are You Financially Fit? 11:00 am—12:00 pm	28 ⁶ Yoga at Your Desk 11:00 am—12:00 pm ——— ⁷ Wellness and Stress Management 12:30 pm—1:30 pm	29 ³ TRIO & MidFirst Bank Financial Literacy: Retirement, Savings & 401K's 12:00 pm—1:00 pm ——— ¹ Relationships 5:00 pm—6:00 pm	30 

REGISTRATION REQUIRED—Non-TRIO workshops are subject to change.

¹Student and Community Counseling Center Workshop: Registration Required: RSVP at: (303) 315-7270

²Student Financial Services Financial Literacy: Registration Required: RSVP at: <https://application.admissions.ucdenver.edu/portal/financialaidliteracy>

³TRIO SSS Financial Literacy Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: <https://bit.ly/3rkhBVa>

⁴Student Life LEAD Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: MyLynx.ucdenver.edu

⁵Wellness & Recreation Services Financial Literacy Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: <https://www.ucdenver.edu/wellness/matters/financial-wellness>

⁶TRIO SSS Skill Building Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: <https://bit.ly/2LYSIhJ>

⁷Learning Resources Center Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: <https://www.ucdenver.edu/learning-resources-center/resources>