

THE PILLAR

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE TRIO SSS COMMUNITY

"Helping Students Realize Their Full Potential"



April 2022
ISSUE

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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.

YOU GOT THIS

Student Spotlight—Alexa Dominguez



TRIO Student Support Services would like to highlight Alexa Dominguez in this month's newsletter. Alexa will be graduating this spring semester with a degree in Accounting and Information Systems. Her biggest challenge in earning her degree is being a first-generation student who pushed herself too much, which greatly affected her mental health. She stated, "In my mind, I have strived to be a perfect student to make my parents proud. I have always struggled with time management. As a result, I spent many sleepless nights, because of how drained and overwhelmed I was with all my assignments." One thing she wished she had been told before entering college is that not everything goes as planned. She had moments where she felt very disappointed in herself, which led to insecurities because things did not go the way she expected. Alexa wishes someone had prepared her for those stumbles in undergrad. She mentioned, "One example would be at orientation; I was not guided in which classes I needed to take. I started college as a graphic design major, and the first class I attended was with students that already had three years under their belt. This was before I got into TRIO and learned to never be afraid to ask questions."

Alexa was asked how TRIO has helped her. She says that coming to college was the best decision she ever made and applying to TRIO SSS has been the second-best decision. Alexa is a proud first-generation Latina who feels the TRIO office created a safe space where she felt comfortable seeking help and getting out of her comfort zone. She stated, "TRIO pushed me to network and empowered me to continue achieving my goals. Their continuous support and motivation have taken me to where I am at right now, a few weeks away from graduation. TRIO has helped me tremendously to become a better person personally and professionally. Thank you to everyone who has supported me and cheered me on throughout my years here. I am going to miss you all."



As far as her short-term goals, she would like to gain experience in the accounting field. Upon graduation, she accepted an internship with BDO. Her long-term goal is to become a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). She wants to return to school and complete the required credits to earn her CPA certification. She looks forward to one day owning an accounting firm. Her favorite college memory is being able to connect with people from diverse backgrounds and create friendships while learning from the people she met. She noted, "I will always remember the good laughs we have shared here at TRIO."

TO BE CONTINUED ...

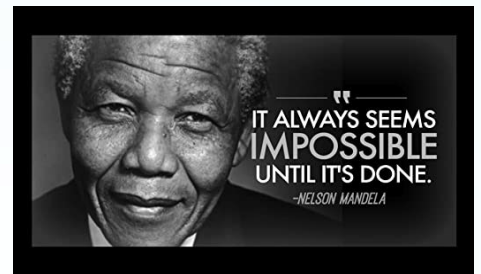
Student Spotlight



If Alexa were to win a million dollars, she would give her family back as much as they have given her. They have been her financial and academic support. She would also travel around the world. As for her hobbies, she loves being able to connect with nature by going out for walks and bike rides. She enjoys photography because it allows her to capture significant moments. Alexa loves to play video and board games.

Alexa's experience here at CU Denver has been positive and negative. She has been able to build long-lasting relationships and meet amazing people through her undergrad journey. Alexa stated, "Coming into college as a naïve young adult, I was timid, afraid, and questioning what was ahead of me. It has been an adventure. CU Denver TRIO has given me the tools to learn the value of responsibility; it has given me the confidence to express myself to those around me. In addition, it has allowed me to mature and have a different perspective of what it meant to be in college. College is not just a degree but also an opportunity to grow as an individual and influence a community. The negative experience that I leave as a dull moment in my life has to deal with racial injustices against me as a first-gen Latina, including having to justify my work ethic for a coding class. The profes-

sor did not think I was able to do the work since most of the class had failed the assignment. Nevertheless, my family and TRIO were there to support me while I had to sit with a committee. The outcome of the situation was in my favor. Shout Out to Daniela! I tell you that there is no challenge that cannot be overcome with support." Alexa leaves us with her favorite quote, "It always seems impossible until it's done." ~ Nelson Mandela.



When asked about what advice she would give to other TRIO participants; "Never stop chasing your dreams," she said, "believe me, you will have circumstances where you will want to give up, or as we say in Spanish, *"tirar la toalla,"* but always follow your heart and fight for your goals. It's never too late to network and create relationships with your peers. The world is waiting for you to make the most of it!" She recommends not procrastinating on your TRIO Book Scholarship deadlines and taking advantage of all the wonderful services TRIO offers such as workshops, mentoring, and tutoring, because these types of opportunities only come once in a lifetime. The TRIO SSS office would like to wish Alexa luck in her future endeavors.

National Financial Literacy Month

National Financial Literacy Month is celebrated in April. It's a great way for people to take a step back and check and improve their financial situation and skills. Financial Literacy Month aims to promote, advocate for, and support financial literacy efforts across the U.S. Financial Literacy Month was first recognized in April 2004. It originated from youth literacy day, which came from National Endowment for Financial Education. In 2003, the United States Congress showed excellent support for Financial Literacy Month after the Senate Resolution and House Resolution requested President George W. Bush to declare April as the month of financial literacy.



It is important that we create opportunities for our students to have access to the right learning opportunities and preparation for whatever they will need in the future. CU Denver also offers several financial literacy workshops. Here is where you could go to learn more and develop your financial skills:

- Wellness Center
- TRIO SSS Financial Literacy Workshop
- ENRICH Financial Planning

Hopefully, during April, you can learn more about financial literacy and how to make and spend money the smart way.

National Pet Day—April 11, 2022

Celebrate your animal buddy and hug your lovable pets because April 11 is National Pet Day. This national holiday has become an international holiday celebrated in multiple countries around the globe. An advocate for pets, Colleen Paige, saw a need to bring attention to animal shelters overly populated with dogs and cats waiting to be adopted. Colleen Paige is one of the leading experts in animal and family lifestyles. Colleen believed in cultivating compassion towards animals. Her brainchild, National Pet Day, was birthed in 2006, and it has been celebrated ever since. Colleen celebrates all pets and encourages adoption from a rescue shelter or purebred rescue organization.

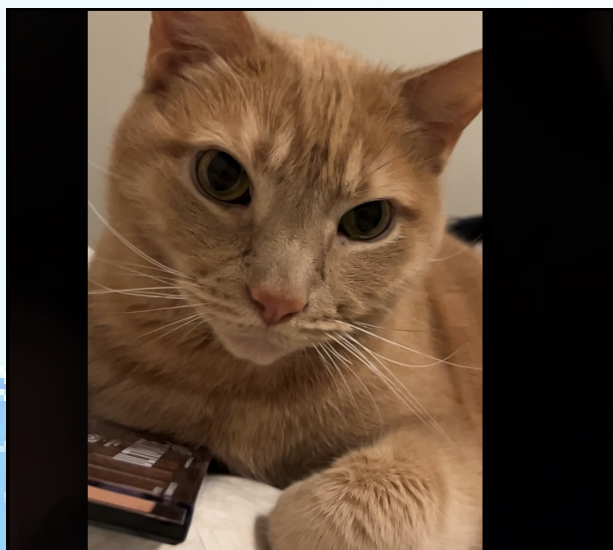
National Pet Day is a worldwide celebrity partnership. Celebrities invest in National Pet Day, a lifesaving mission, by attaching their celebrity status to bring awareness to adopting pets from rescue shelters worldwide.

10 Ways to Celebrate National Pet Day!

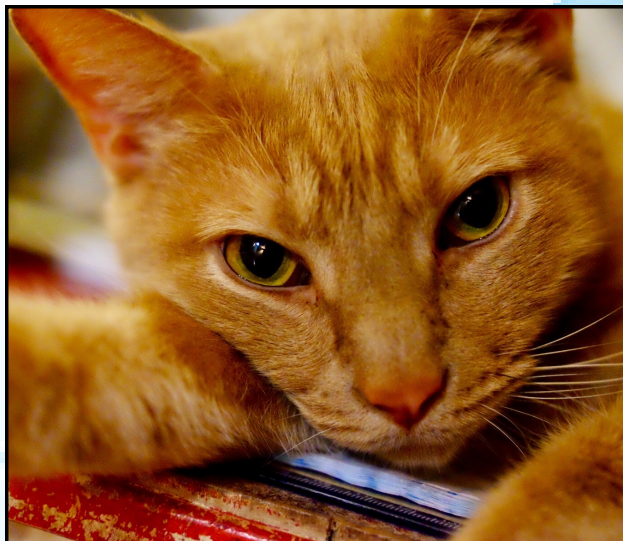
- Adopt a pet from your local shelter or pure breed rescue organization
- Volunteer at your local shelter
- Donate blankets, food, and toys to an animal welfare organization
- Have a National Pet Day party and celebrate all your pets
- Spend the day taking pictures of your pets and post them on social media
- Buy your pet a fun new toy
- Watch a pet movie together
- It's time to play! Toss the ball
- Give some extra love to your pet
- Take your pet to a doggie friend restaurant and split a meal you both will love



"I believe all animals are sentient beings that deserve our love and compassion...even not-so-cuddly animals like reptiles and rats. No animal should ever have to suffer, especially at the hand of humans. MILLIONS of unwanted animals perish every day due to just that....being 'unwanted'" ~ Colleen Paige



Ozelotl Valencia—11 year's old



Josephine Thibodeau | TRIO SSS Graduate Assistant

Earth Day Ideas and Activities

Earth day is on April 22nd; it is an annual event that celebrates and demonstrates support for environmental protection. This environmental movement was first introduced in 1970 to educate Americans on environmental concerns and how pollution can affect the environment and human health. Now it has spread globally and is celebrated in numerous countries where individuals celebrate our beautiful planet and spread awareness on ways to be active in taking care of our planet.

Activities to celebrate Earth Day:

Connect with Nature: Get out of the house and get up on your feet. Do things such as taking a walk in a local/national park or even going outside and soaking in nature!

Attend an Event or Volunteer in your Local Communities: There are many volunteering opportunities across cities; find a place to volunteer and give back to your local community.

Plant a Tree or Start a Garden: This has a lot of benefits. You can give back to the earth where it can create new habitats for wildlife and help clean the air.

Have a Dinner Party: Invite your friends over and serve local, organic foods for a delicious, nutritious meal that features sustainable, healthy options while you chat about Earth Day.

Pick up Litter: Spend your day outside picking up trash around your neighborhood or local community. You can even make this a group activity or competition to encourage your friends and family to do it with you.



Earth Day invites us to celebrate and appreciate our planet. Don't just engage in these activities on Earth Day, but implement them into your daily life, give back to your communities, and support the environment every day.

Emily Huynh | TRIO SSS Office Assistant

CU Denver Club Highlight—Beta Alpha Psi (BAP)



Beta Alpha Psi (BAP) is an honorary and professional association for students in the financial information professions. BAP's purpose includes: recognition of outstanding academic achievements in the field of financial information; promotion of the study and practice of the financial information professions; provision of opportunities for self-development and association among members and practicing professionals; and encouragement of a sense of ethical, social, and public responsibility. This organization aims to: 1) Provide information and promote an interest in the various facets of the financial information professions in the Denver area. 2) Act as a liaison between financial information students and faculty at the University of Colorado Denver. 3) Foster and maintain a relationship with Theta Sigma Chapter alumni. 4) Enhance the awareness among potential employers about financial information students and the financial information programs at the University of Colorado Denver. 5) Engage in community service projects which are considered with our professional image.

For more information on Beta Alpha Psi, please visit the CU Denver, Presence website at: <https://ucdenver.presence.io/organization/beta-alpha-psi-bap-theta-sigma-chapter>. You can also review other CU Denver Organizations. Check it out today and get involved.

De-stressing Activities

The last couple of weeks of the semester can bring a lot of stress to students. Now is a great time to try new de-stressing techniques and activities. Taking a break is a way for our mind and body to rest. Breaks can increase our productivity and re-energize us to return to studying with a clear head. In this article, I will share different de-stressing techniques and activities. The following are some ways to reduce stress:



- Mediating is a popular way to relieve stress. It can be part of your daily routine or a quick-fix stress reliever. Start by looking up “guided meditation” videos on YouTube or download easy-to-use apps like:
 - Insight Timer- Meditation for Sleep and Anxiety App. Free on Apple and Android
 - Headspace: Mindful Meditation App. 14 day free trial
- Exercising is a way to relieve stress because it produces endorphins, your brain's “feel-good” neurotransmitters called endorphins.
- Sleep is essential for our bodies because it enables us to repair and prepare for the next day! Professionals recommend getting at least 7 hours of sleep per night.
- Art therapy is a way to foster healing and mental well-being. Techniques in art therapy include:
 - Coloring | Painting | Working with Clay | Collage
- Listening to music can instantly change your mood by returning you to a state of calmness and peace.

Emily Patino | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

TRIO KUDOS!

KUDOS TO YOU

Have an accomplishment? Please tell TRIO about it. You can stop by the TRIO Office and write your kudos, news, achievements, etc., on the TRIO Kudos Board or you can email [Henry Ornelas](#).

- ☆ Jennifer Martinez Gomez was recently accepted into the CU Denver PSI CHI Honor Society.
- ☆ Eh K Blue Lah has been accepted to the School of Education, Masters of Arts in Counseling, Clinical Mental Health program.
- ☆ Emily Huynh recently accepted internship with KPMG and will start in summer 2022.
- ☆ Alexa Dominguez-Estrella recently accepted internship with BDO and will start in summer 2022.
- ☆ Cristal Sarmiento Garcia joined the TRIO SSS Community as new Peer Mentor.
- ☆ Patitta Banjongwit recently passed her Business Capstone Exam.
- ☆ Tiffany Tasker, TRIO McNair Scholar has been accepted into the University of Colorado Denver, School of Education and Human Development, Doctorate in Education: Leadership for Educational Equity in Urban and Diverse Communities program.
- ☆ Kayla Medina, TRIO McNair Scholar was accepted into the AMC Post-baccalaureate Pike Prep program.

Director's Corner

Dear SSS Participants,

April is here, and I can almost taste summer! This month is the last big push before finals begin. Remember that you have many resources to help you end the semester strongly. If you haven't already done so, I encourage you to form a study group or visit the Learning Resource Center if you need additional tutoring. If your finals will include essays, get started early! Break the paper into manageable tasks, including – outlining, gathering resources and evidence, drafting, editing, and revising. The Writing Center is staffed with talented writing tutors who can help you with the different writing stages.

For those of you working towards earning the Fall 2022 Book Scholarship, don't forget to complete your final coordinator meeting and financial literacy workshop by Friday, April 29th. In addition to several live financial workshops, the Enrich platform offers an on-demand option that can fit into anyone's schedule.

I am super excited about our upcoming **Senior Recognition Ceremony on Friday, April 22nd**. After two years of social distancing, we'll be recognizing the achievements of our Spring and Summer graduates while enjoying tasty appetizers. I encourage you to stop by and join the merriment, even if only for a few minutes. The following Friday, April 29th, is one of my favorite CU Denver events, the Research and Creative Activities Symposium (RaCAS). I love attending presentations by our talented students. I encourage you to stop by and support your peers who have spent numerous weeks and months working on the research and creative projects.

Be well,
Sonia Valencia
Director, TRIO SSS & McNair



Recipe—Chicken Caprese

INGREDIENTS (2 SERVINGS):

- ☆ 2 chicken breasts
- ☆ extra virgin olive oil
- ☆ pesto sauce
- ☆ half tomato
- ☆ mozzarella cheese

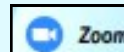


INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Bake chicken breasts on a cooking sheet at 400°F for about 20-25 minutes until the internal temperature is 165 degrees
2. Slice the tomato and mozzarella cheese while the chicken breasts are cooking
3. Remove the cooking sheet out of the oven, place the cooking sheet on a heat-safe surface, and spread pesto sauce on the chicken
4. Add sliced tomato and cheese on top of the pesto sauce
5. Place the cooking sheet back in the oven and bake for about 5~8 minutes
6. Remove the cooking sheet out of the oven, place the cooking sheet on a heat-safe surface, plate the chicken and enjoy! Garnish with fresh chopped basil if desired.

Alexandria Joo | Project Specialist TRIO SSS & McNair Scholars

April Workshop Calendar



Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
4 Please complete your Program/Book Scholarship requirements by the deadline.	5 ¹ Different Types of Leadership 12:30 pm — 1:30 pm SC, 2000 	6 ² Teamwork & Collaboration 3:30 pm — 4:30 pm Zoom ID: 940-0159-9764	7	8
11 YOU ARE THE ARTIST OF YOUR OWN LIFE. DON'T HAND THE PAINTBRUSH TO ANYONE ELSE.	12 ³ Ace My Tests— Test-Taking Skill 11:30 am — 12:30 pm Learning Commons	13 ³ Take Control of Your Semester: Time Management 1:00 pm — 2:00 pm ² Self Advocacy in Workplace 3:30 pm — 4:30 pm Zoom ID: 940-0159-9764	14 ⁴ TRIO SSS Financial Literacy: Let's Budget 12:00 pm — 1:00 pm	15 SSS Senior Recognition RSVP Deadline Register Here: https://bit.ly/3uJFet5
18	19 ³ Due Today ≠ Do Today 11:30 am — 12:30 pm Learning Commons Don't Miss the	20 ³ Wellness & Stress Management 1:00 pm — 2:00 pm ² Socially Responsible Leadership 3:30 pm — 4:30 pm Zoom ID: 940-0159-9764	21 	22 SSS Senior Recognition Ceremony Student Commons 1401 2:30 pm — 4:00 pm
25 ¹ Now or Later? Procrastination 3:00 pm — 4:00 pm SC, 2000	26 ¹ Coping with Stress using Art 2:00 pm — 3:00 pm SC, 2000	27 ⁴ TRIO SSS Financial Literacy: Saving Strategies & Retirement 10:00 am — 11:00 am SC, 2000	28	29 Final Book Scholarship Deadline

Please register and be on-time as professional courtesy to the presenter.
 You should receive correspondence with either room location or zoom link information.
 Complete your Online Evaluation Form for Workshops and Financial Literacy Sessions at: <https://bit.ly/34QeyNS>

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

¹TRIO SSS Skill Building Workshops: **Registration Required:** RSVP at: <https://bit.ly/33FUnSc>

²Student Life LEAD Workshops: **Registration is not required** please see calendar for details.

³Learning Resource Center Workshops: **Registration Required:** RSVP at: <https://www.ucdenver.edu/learning-resources-center/resources>

⁴TRIO SSS Financial Literacy Workshops: **Registration Required:** RSVP at: <https://bit.ly/3FthooF>