

THE PILLAR

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE TRIO SSS COMMUNITY

"Helping Students Realize Their Full Potential"

December 2021
ISSUE

Page Guide

Page 1

• Student Spotlight

Page 2

• Spotlight Continued • New Office Assistant

Page 3

• New Graduate Assistant

Page 4

• National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month

Page 5

• Holiday Movies

Page 6

• Banana Bread Recipe • Kudos

Page 7

• 2021 Holiday Events • Important Dates

Page 8

• Director's Corner • Upcoming Events

Page 9

• December Calendar

You did it!

Student Spotlight—Karina Orona Gonzalez

For this month's edition, our office would like to highlight Karina Orona. Karina will be graduating spring 2022 semester with a Bachelor of Science in Public Health and a minor in Biology. Karina's biggest challenge while earning her degree was the pandemic. Having to adjust to learning at home by herself at times was frustrating. The pandemic also gave her the opportunity to allow herself to refocus her time and energy on the things that really mattered. It taught her the importance of self-care and enjoying other hobbies outside of school. Her college experience was unique, to say the least. It helped her to become a better version of herself. Karina began college during the summer of 2018 as part of the summer bridge program. She states, "This opportunity allowed me to meet new people and immerse myself academically before the academic year started." She joined TRIO SSS fall of 2018 and met Daniela, her mentor and TRIO SSS Program Coordinator, the summer she visited CU Denver for the first time. Coming into college, she thought she knew what she wanted to do and had a plan of how she would achieve it. She says, "But of course, life happens, and plans change. My sophomore year, I decided to take the intro to public health class, and while watching a film in class I decided that this was what I wanted to major in. Picking public health as my major has taught me so much about the injustices of the world we live in, but it has also given me hope for the world we could create. As a senior, as I am getting ready to graduate, I am mostly excited and a little nervous for what is to come. I acknowledge that I am truly a lucky person to be surrounded by many old and new friends along with my family who loves me and have supported me throughout my whole college journey."



One thing that Karina wished she was told when she started college is the importance of building a support system. She says, "Coming into college in my mind, I had it all figured out and really struggled to ask for help. However, as time went on, I realized that it was okay not to have the answers to everything. After all, we are in college to learn, and it is okay to seek help from others. Building a support system, in the end, is what helped me keep going even in times when I doubted myself". Her favorite memory in college was during finals week when someone brought dogs to campus and held mini-events throughout the week to help students cope with finals. She was asked, how has TRIO helped you? Karina says, "TRIO for me became a safe space where I always felt welcomed. It is easy to feel overwhelmed and a little lost in such a big campus. Meeting with my mentor always felt like chatting with a friend and would ease any nerves I was feeling. Having this support system encouraged me to explore and learn about many different opportunities." Her advice to other TRIO participants would be to embrace change and trust their own timeline. She continues by saying, "Things happen for people at different times, and it is okay to be at a different stage of your life than the people around you."

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ...

Spotlight Continued—Karina Orona Gonzalez



As for her short and long-term goals, in the next year, after she graduates, she is going to take a gap year. During the gap year, she would like to become a medical scribe at one of the local hospitals and possibly move into an outpatient clinic after that. She would like to keep exploring the field of public health. She wants to focus on programs and institutions that are helping to better the experience of women in the healthcare system. As for her long-term goal, she would like to attend and graduate from physician assistant school and specialize in women's health or pediatrics. "On top of that, I would like to travel," she says.

If Karina were to win a million dollars, the first thing she would do is buy a house and travel. She says, "Growing up I have always been aware of the importance of building a home that brings you peace and comfort. I would also love the opportunity to travel abroad to learn about other people's ways and how they live. I think there is a lot we can learn from other cultures and what is important to them." Karina's hobbies and interests consist of cooking/baking, reading mystery novels, listening to and watching true crime and paranormal stories. Also, she enjoys spending time with family and friends and watching Netflix. Her favorite quote, "nacimos para vencer y no para ser vencidos" which translates to "We were born to defeat, not to be defeated." She states, "I first saw this quote on a graduation cap and felt connected to it. This is my favorite quote because it reminds me of my strength. Through all the self-doubt, the anxiety, the small and big problems, I know that I can overcome anything by taking it one step at a time." We wish Karina continued success as she completes her degree and accomplishes what she sets her mind to do.

Welcome—Office Assistant—Emily Huynh

Hi, my name is Emily Huynh; I am a fourth-year student at UCD. I am a first-generation student majoring in Accounting. I was born and raised in Colorado and have lived here my whole life. I came to UCD not knowing my major or life goals. I first decided to go on a pre-dental track but then decided it wasn't for me. During my journey at UCD, I encountered accounting and felt a connection to it. I was drawn to numbers since I was a kid. Accounting to me is a very impactful occupation. It impacts many people and makes me glad that I can be of help and be a part of other businesses or individuals. My goal in accounting as of right now is to complete my CPA requirements and be able to pass my CPA exam. I want to get into public accounting and work as an auditor at a company.

Being a first-generation student came with challenges and difficulties. I didn't have some of the resources that other individuals had. But through the challenges and difficulties I faced, I was able to grow immensely as an individual. Through my mom, I was able to learn and experience that hard work pays off eventually. She always has played a big role in my life and taught me many valuable tips that I still implement into my life every day. I am very grateful for what I have and am very glad and proud of my identity. I am very excited to be a part of TRIO, and I hope to learn and gain experiences along the way. I look forward to meeting students and working with my fellow TRIO staff!



Welcome! Graduate Assistant—Josephine Thibodeau



Hola todos! My name is Josephine Thibodeau [she/her/hers/ ella], I am excited to join the TRIO community at CU Denver as a Graduate Student Assistant. I identify as a proud Chicana. I am a transplant to colorful Colorado. In 1997, I arrived at Aurora, Colorado, with my Air Force husband, Chris, and two babies, Anastasia and Christopher Joseph. After a couple of years, my husband received orders for Australia. We moved to Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia. After living in the Red Center for five years, it was time to return stateside. Our next assignment, ...you guessed it, was Colorado. Chris has since retired, and we have settled in beautiful Colorado. My background: I was born and raised in San Antonio, Texas. I am the oldest of three. I am a second-generation college student. I began my college pursuits at San Antonio Community College. At the time, I was working full time and attending community college in the evenings. After three years, I transferred to Texas A & M University, College Station, Texas. I earned my Bachelor

of Science in Education Curriculum and Instruction. I taught in the primary grades for six years at a brick-and-mortar school. Later, I homeschooled my children until they completed eighth grade. Anastasia attended and graduated from Regis Jesuit High School, and Christopher attended and graduated from Eaglecrest High School.

As a graduate of Arapahoe Community College, I served as a peer mentor for the Student Success Center, the Academic Advising office, and the NEXT program for GED completion. I supported Elevate at Arapahoe Community College, the college's inclusive higher education program for students with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD), as a peer mentor, peer advisor, and tutor. I am a board-certified Emergency Medical Technician. I am a PTK Alumnae. I am the recipient of the Inclusive Excellence Champion Award, which recognizes students and student organizations that demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus. I was selected for this award because of my involvement in supporting and creating diversity services to address inequity, expand inclusiveness on campus, and advocate for social justice and intercultural awareness.

In the fall of 2020, I began the graduate program at CU Denver to pursue M. A. in counseling with a concentration in Higher Education & Student Affairs. I will be graduating in spring 2022. I aspire to support college scholars navigating collegiate endeavors. As the TRIO SSS graduate assistant, I aspire to help TRIO SSS scholars navigate their academic needs by supporting the mastery of their role as students, developing self-advocacy, and creating space for sense of belonging in order that they build confidence and become successful scholars and professionals. I look forward to meeting and partnering with all of you.

Favorite Quote: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen."

This quote is meaningful to Josephine because it is the confidence that she has in the future promises of God in her life.



National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month



There are multiple holidays and opportunities for celebration in December and there could be a temptation for some drinks. December has been designated National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month – National 3D Prevention serves as a reminder to never drive impaired.

“According to the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, the time period between Thanksgiving Day and New Year’s Day is “one of the deadliest and most dangerous times on America’s roadways because of an increase in impaired driving.”

Do not operate a vehicle if you have been drinking or are under the influence of drugs. It is a crime to drive impaired when your ability to operate a vehicle by effects of drugs, prescription medication, over-the-counter medication, or a blood-alcohol concentration of 0.08 grams per deciliter or higher.

Accidents caused by driving under the influence are preventable. Commit to act responsibly and drive safely. Here are a few tips to keep in the back of your mind as you are expecting holiday parties and other get-togethers.

Tips to help ensure everyone’s safety this holiday season:

- Always plan ahead and **Designate a sober driver** before celebrations begin.
- Remind your loved ones how important it is to be **responsible and stay safe**.
- Plan safe parties, including **providing non-alcoholic drink** options to guests and not serving alcohol the last hour of the gathering.
- **Never serve those under the age of 21 alcohol.**
- **Be prepared to get everyone home safe** in case your plans or individual circumstances change.
- **Give the Gift of a Designated Driver.** Volunteer to be a designated sober driver for your friends and family during the holiday season.
- **Buzzed Driving is still impaired driving**

285 drunk-driving related fatalities occurred during the Christmas and New Year’s period in 2018. In 2017, 45% of the drivers killed in fatal crashes who were tested for drugs had positive test. Drugs other than alcohol (legal and illegal) are involved in about 16% of motor vehicle crashes on average. Driving under the influence of any substance is preventable and there are safety measures you can take to avoid being injured in an impaired driving accident or causing one yourself.

What to do if you encounter an impaired driver on the road.

Stay alert while on the road. Stay far away from motorist who appear to be driving while under the influence. You may notice a few signs such as quick acceleration or deceleration, tailgating, weaving, abrupt and erratic braking, swerving and others. If safe to do so, pull over and call 911 to report a suspected impaired driver. Note the location and let the law enforcement step in.

References

- <https://nationaldaycalendar.com/national-drunk-drugged-driving-prevention-month-december/>
- <https://tampabaymonitoring.com/2016/12/december-is-national-drunk-and-drugged-driving-prevention-month/>
- <https://www.bergeronlawfirm.com/how-to-stay-safe-during-national-drunk-and-drugged-driving-prevention-month/>

Alexandria Joo | TRIO SSS Project Specialist

Holiday Movies

It's that time of year again, where lights are hung, songs are sung, and Christmas is right around the corner. Family and friends gather to celebrate the holidays, and what better way is there to spend the holidays than drinking hot chocolate and watching a movie with your loved ones? It's time to grab your fluffy socks, favorite blanket and turn on one or more of these Christmas classics to indulge in the holiday spirit!



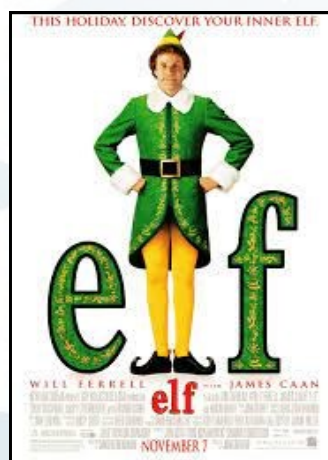
Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas (2000)

This film is a live adaptation of the childhood cartoon "How the Grinch stole Christmas." written by the famous illustrator and cartoonist Dr. Seuss. Directed by Ron Howard, the main plot follows the life of the Grinch, a furry green creature that lives on the outskirts of Whoville. A social out-cast, the Grinch lives in a high mountain cave with his loyal companion and dog Max. Isolated from the rest of the town and engulfed by anger and despair, the Grinch makes it his goal to ruin the whole town's Christmas just as they ruined his.



Home Alone (1990)

One of the most famous holiday movies in western culture, Home Alone tells the story of an 8-year old boy who is forgotten at home while his family is on vacation for Christmas. After being left by his family, the main character Kevin awakes to an empty house with the idea that his dream of having no family came true. Excited to be all by himself, Kevin enjoys his time alone when some unexpected guest pay him a visit. Two con men who intend to rob the home that Kevin lives in realize they are in for a challenge as the 8-year old child protects his home by any and every means.



Elf (2003)

Perhaps one of the most iconic Christmas movies of the 21st century, Elf brings love, laughter, and joy to the holiday season. Starring Will Ferrell as a human who accidentally sneaks into Santa's gift bag as a baby and is transported to the north pole, where he is raised as one of Santa's elves. As he grows older, Buddy (Ferrell) realizes the significant differences that inhibit him from performing the elf tasks, so he ventures off to New York City to find his real father. Along the way, Buddy learns that life is not as sweet as it is in the North Pole, but this does not deter his elf-like optimism to develop a relationship with his father and other individuals along the way. Elf is a terrific movie for anyone who needs some Christmas spirit and laughs for this upcoming holiday.

Michael Martinez | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

Banana Bread Recipe



Ingredients

- 3-4 Overripe Bananas
- ½ Cup melted butter
- 2 Eggs, beaten
- 1 Teaspoon of vanilla
- 1 Cup of Sugar
- 1.5 Cups of Flour
- 1 Teaspoon of baking soda
- ½ Teaspoon of salt

SO
YUMMY!

Steps

1. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees and lightly grease a 9x5 inch loaf pan.
2. In a large bowl, smash your overripe bananas using a fork. Then, add the melted butter, the beaten eggs and the vanilla.
3. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, the sugar, the baking soda, and the salt.
4. Mix all the ingredients together with a hand mixer and stir until everything is blended.
5. Pour the batter into your prepared loaf pan and bake for about 55 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. If the outside of the loaf is browned but the center is still wet, loosely tent the loaf with foil and continue baking until the loaf is fully baked.
6. Remove from oven and let cool in the pan for a few minutes. Then remove the banana bread from the pan and let it cool completely before serving. Slice and serve to enjoy!

Alexa Dominguez– Estrella | SSS Office Assistant

TRIO Kudos

Well done!

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!

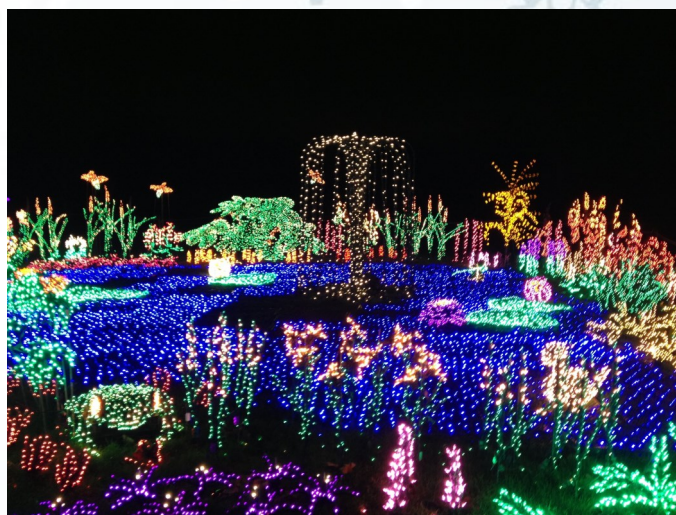
- ★ Marcel Ichaka was accepted into the Master of Arts program in Political Science.
- ★ Michelle Ramirez was awarded the Trimble Engineering and Management Scholarship.
- ★ Angel De La Cruz accepted position as CNA Porter Adventist Hospital in the Oncology Department.

Congratulations and great job on your hard work. Keep it up!

Holiday Events 2021

Are you looking for something fun to do during winter break? Here is a list of events that is happening in Colorado!

- **November 13, 2021— January 15, 2021**
Garden Lights at Botanical Garden
- **November 19, 2021—December 23, 2021**
Denver Christkindlmarket, Denver
- **November 19, 2021—January 1, 2021**
Polar Express Train Ride, Durango
- **November 22, 2021—January 2, 2021**
Zoo Lights at the Denver Zoo, Denver
- **November 26, 2021—January 2, 2021**
Luminova Holidays at Elitch Gardens
- **December 4, 2021**
Lighting of Breckenridge & Race of the Santas, Breckenridge
- **December 4, 2021**
Parade of Lights, Denver
- **The Santa Express at the Royal Gorge, Canon City**
- **Holiday & Christmas Shows at Denver Theater, Denver: Here is the link to the show times and tickets in Denver: [Denver Theater: Broadway Shows, Musicals, Plays, Concerts in 2021/22 \(denver-theater.com\)](https://denver-theater.com)**



Patitta Banjongwit | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

Important Dates

INFORMATION	DATE	IMPORTANT NOTES
Last Day to withdraw from a class	December 8, 2021	With a Late Withdraw Petition form
Finals Week	December 12—18, 2021	
End of semester—Commencement	December 18, 2021	
Finals grades available on UCDAccess and transcripts	December 23, 2021	
Winter Break	December 25, 2021—January 1, 2022	No classes. Campus Closed

Director's Corner

Dear SSS Students,

I hope you and your loved ones are well. As we approach finals, please remember that the entire TRIO team is here to help you end on a high note. The Learning Resource Center and Writing Center are also available to you as you prepare for finals. Good luck with all your final papers and exams. We're rooting for you!

Congratulations to our Fall 2021 graduates! It has been an honor to be part of your academic journey. Please keep in touch and let us know how you're doing. We wish you the best in your future endeavors! For those students coming back next semester, I hope you find time to rest, reflect, and recharge this winter break.

Thank you for making 2021 a great year. We wish you and your loved ones a safe and happy holiday season and a prosperous New Year. We look forward to serving in the new year! Be safe and be well.

Sonia Valencia
Director, TRIO SSS & McNair



Upcoming Events

★ AFRICAN STUDENT UNION
OF AURARIA

Hot Chocolate Party

Join ASU for our last event of the semester and indulge in a hot chocolate bar and snacks ahead of finals week!

*dairy/lactose free options available



December 07 | 5:30 to 7:30 PM
North Classroom 1403

Stop by anytime between 5:30 and 7:30 PM
Do you need a fun study environment? Bring your work with you.
Do you need a study break? Come by and relax.

MEETING TIME & PLACE
THURSDAYS @ 4:30 PM
SEMINAR ROOM IN WELLNESS CENTER
(PLEASE ASK AT THE FRONT DESK IF YOU NEED HELP FINDING IT!)




FIRST YEAR MEET UP GROUP

A fun and interactive setting for first year students to hangout, share their experiences, and make friends!

Hosted By: Hiba Hussain and Oscar Fraire


FINALS BOOST



JOIN US FOR FINALS BOOST DURING FINALS WEEK! FREE SNACKS, SCHOOL SUPPLIES, SWAG, & MORE!

DEC.13: NORTH CLASSROOM
DEC.14: STUDENT COMMONS
DEC.15: WELLNESS CENTER

9AM - 1PM EACH DAY!



QUESTIONS? EMAIL STUDENTEVENTS@UCDENVER.EDU

University Events
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER

Bollywood Dance Pop-Up

Join us for an introductory Bollywood dance workshop series led by Girija. Bollywood Dance is the name given to the dance-form used in Indian films. Bollywood Dance style incorporates head, neck and body movements, mudras and foot-work. You will learn simple choreography at each session.

Register:

<https://ucdenver.edu/wellness/programs/fitness/group-fitness/programs-events>

📅 Wednesday, December 8, 2021 6:30pm to 7:30pm



December Newsletter

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
<p>Please register and be on-time as professional courtesy to the presenter.</p> <p>They will be sending you an email with either room location or zoom link.</p> <p>Complete your TRIO SSS Online Evaluation Form for Workshops and Financial Literacy Sessions at: https://bit.ly/3jmZL0K</p>		<p>1</p> <p>¹Wellness & Recreation Financial wellness: Start Small: Emotions & Money 12:00pm—1:00pm Wellness Center Seminar Room</p> <p>²Coping with Stress 3:00pm—4:00pm</p>	<p>2</p> <p>²Professional Effective Networking 9:00am—10:00am SC, 2000</p> <p>¹Wellness & Recreation Financial wellness: Preparing for Life After Graduation 11:00am—12:00pm Wellness Center Seminar Room</p>	<p>3</p> <p>²Now or Later? Procrastination 1:00pm—2:00pm SC, 2018</p>
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23 Final Grades Available UCDACCESS	24
27 Winter Break	28 Winter Break	29 Winter Break	30 Winter Break	31 Winter Break

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

¹Wellness & Recreation Services Financial Literacy Workshops: **Registration Required:** RSVP at: <https://www.ucdenver.edu/wellness/matters/financial-wellness>

²TRIO SSS Skill Building Workshops: **Registration Required:** RSVP at: <https://bit.ly/3ipckJA>

Life is very interesting.
 In the end some of your greatest pains become your greatest strengths.
 —Drew Barrymore