

THE PILLAR

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"Helping Students Realize Their Full Potential"



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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.

shine

Student Spotlight— Kayla Medina



TRIO SSS would like to highlight Kayla Medina, she will be graduating spring 2021 with a major in Integrative Biology and minors in Biophysics and Spanish. Kayla's experience in college has had obstacles and challenges, but overall great. She mentions, "I remember my first year being the most challenging since I had to navigate higher education blindly due to not being aware of the resources CU Denver offered regarding tutoring and advising. After being exposed to different resources that aided me in becoming a better student, I was able to fully enjoy my classes. My favorite courses were Molecular Biology, Genetics, and Organic Chemistry." The biggest challenge that she faced earning her degree has been taking care of her younger sister, who is diagnosed with a rare genetic disorder called Prader-Willie syndrome. She states, "My younger sister was born during the first semester that I started college in 2016. Her diagnosis and her care took a lot of time and dedication that it was hard to balance and manage my school and personal life. However, I have learned to balance and manage every aspect of my life."

Kayla's favorite memory in college was attending a bioinformatics workshop during the summer of 2018 because she had the opportunity to meet Dr. Chris Miller. Dr. Miller gave her an amazing opportunity to work as a research assistant in his lab. She says, "I have learned valuable skills that will help me in pursuing research. The skills that I have gained consist of hands-on projects (performing DNA extraction, Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) and software programming to analyze large amounts of data (bash scripting, python)." The experience she had in this workshop was an eye-opener for her, her long-term goal is to graduate with her Master of Science and pursue a doctorate in Molecular Biology or Human Genetics. Her goals for this semester are to earn proficient grades in her classes, and to begin a new chapter of her life pursuing a Master of Science in cell and molecular biology next fall of 2021. Besides her academics, she looks forward marrying her fiancé next year! Kayla's hobbies include going to the boxing gym, snowboarding, dirt biking, watching adventurous movies, and above all she loves eating food.

One thing that she wished someone told her before she started school was to push the boundaries. She states, "It is very important to get out of your comfort zone and explore other interests of yours. Expanding your comfort zone will help you identify your strengths and weaknesses." She was asked, "How has TRIO helped you?" She says, "TRIO has helped me in getting an amazing support system. The peer-mentors and advisors have helped me reach my goals in regard to getting better grades and giving me advice about any doubts or questions I have. Moreover, I feel that TRIO has given me a sense of community with the university. I have become friends with TRIO students in which I feel that I will have everlasting friendships that will go beyond college." The advice that she would give to other TRIO participants is to not be afraid to explore new interests and reach out to the TRIO staff when you have questions.

TO BE CONTINUED...

Spotlight Continued

Kayla was then asked what she would do if she won a million dollars and she said, "I would pay off my dad's house so he can retire. My dad raised my brother and I as a single parent. I see my dad's face that he is getting tired of working so much over the course of many years just to give us everything day by day. He has sacrificed time to be with us when we were younger and his health to give us a roof over our head and food on the table. I want to demonstrate to my dad that I am grateful for everything that he has done." As you can tell Kayla's father has been her support and her motivation to keep going in completing her degree. Kayla leaves us with her favorite quote; "The brevity of life is grace to walk on your own path" -Lailah Gifty Akita. This is her favorite quote because she feels that one should follow one's path and not someone else's. She says, "Everyone is unique in the way someone thinks and feels. For example, I choose to further my education because I knew that I had the potential and willingness to be the person that I wanted to be in the future. Moreover, pursuing an education is a choice. I trust the decision that I had made to continue pursuing my education because I feel that I have become a better person by gaining knowledge that I could share with others. In other words, I can share by wisdom." The TRIO SSS office would like to wish Kayla luck with her future endeavors.



January Facts

- * January is the first month of the year in the Georgian calendar and has 31 days (1 of 7 months)
- * January is named after the Roman god Janus (meaning door), the god had two faces- allowing him to look forward into the coming year and reflect backward at the previous one
- * The original Roman calendar only had 10 months, without January and February
- * In the northern hemisphere January is the coldest month of the year, on average
- * In the southern hemisphere, January is a summer month the equivalent of July
- * In European history, the new year occurred in March
- * The Saxons referred to January as the 'wolf month' because hungry wolves would search for food in their towns at this time of the year
- * January Holidays/Notable dates:
 - ◇ National donate blood month
 - ◇ National soup month
 - ◇ Martin Luther King Day- 15th
 - ◇ National Human Trafficking Awareness day- 11th
 - ◇ Holocaust Memorial Day- 27th
- * Folklore:
 - ◇ Fog in January brings a wet spring.
 - ◇ A favorable January brings us a good year.
 - ◇ If grass grows in January, it will grow badly the whole year.
 - ◇ A summerish January, a winterish spring.
- * January in Other Languages:
 - ◇ Chinese (Mandarin)- yiyue
 - ◇ Danish- Januar
 - ◇ Italian- Gennaio
 - ◇ Latin- Ianuarius
 - ◇ French- Janvier
 - ◇ Spanish- Enero
- * January symbols:
 - ◇ Birthstone- Garnet (representing constancy)
 - ◇ Flower- Carnation & Snowdrop
 - ◇ Zodiac signs- Capricorn (Dec 22nd- Jan 19th) and Aquarius (Jan 20th- Feb 18th)

Did you know?

Zaira Flores | TRIO SSS Graduate Assistant

How To Achieve Your Goals and Dreams

Welcome students to the Spring 2020 semester! I hope you had time over the break to take time for some rest and relaxation, or at least enjoyed the break from classes. As this semester starts, I want to encourage you to take an hour or two and ask yourself what your goals are for this semester. Your goals could be academic, career-oriented, or personal. If you are having a hard time setting goals or roll your eyes every time you read about setting goals, then you're the person that I wrote this article for! This article will talk about practical and effective ways to set goals as well as give you a roadmap for achieving them.



One common theme that runs through many books about success is the ability to create goals and follow thru. One way to do that is through the SMART method of goal setting. When a goal has all the parts laid out below, it is more likely to be achieved than just saying something like: "I want to be better at school". Let's talk about each of them now:

Specific: The more specific the goal, the more that you know what you are working toward. You will be able to look back with pride when you know you have accomplished it. A goal, like "I want to get at least an 80% on all my tests this semester" allows you to see that you are accomplishing your goals or help you realize that you need to work harder to achieve them.

Measurable: A goal should answer questions like *how many*, *how much*, or *how often*. Especially long-term goals should have milestones that can be looked back on so you can see how far you have come. To achieve your 80% goal on tests maybe you decide to study for two hours a week or meet with the professor during office hours to discuss questions every other Wednesday.

Achievable: This one is self-explanatory, but also extremely important. Here you should ask yourself if you *can reasonably* achieve this goal? If you don't have the resources or ability to achieve the goal, then don't make it until you are able to find those resources or become able. If you need help finding resources for any goal there are plenty on campus, so don't be afraid to reach out to your Peer Mentor for help finding those resources.

Relevant: During this part you should ask yourself if this goal is even *worth* setting. Will it enrich your career, academic, or personal life? This step requires a bit of thought and self-reflection. This is also a good place to look back and see if the steps you have laid out all work toward the same goal.

Time-Bound: During the formation of a goal it is incredibly helpful to set a deadline. Here too the more specific the better! Even down to the day and hour, don't be afraid set that deadline because it will actually help to motivate you if you follow the other steps.

Reaching a goal can not only help you feel accomplished, but will help you move forward in life. As I said before if you need any help finding resources for skill building or anything else then ask your Peer Mentor for help, we are more than glad to assist you. I hope you have a successful semester!

Justin Shrader | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

International Cuisine in Denver

What better way to start the New Year off than by visiting some of Denver's most authentic restaurants? Denver is a big city and seems to keep growing endlessly and this growth includes new foods and restaurants. Restaurants like, *La Chiva*, *Maria's Empanadas*, and *African Grill and Bar*, offer a real and cerebral experience through the efforts of their meals and atmosphere.



LA CHIVA: a tiny Colombian style eatery located on S Broadway and Arkansas. La Chiva offers a variety of Colombian cuisine that ranges from Arepas and Yuca to Bandeja Montañera, a Colombian style dish that includes but is not limited to red beans, chorizo, plantains, patacon and avocado with a fried egg. La Chiva is a wonderful establishment that offers dine-in or take-out options, most of the food is imported, and its authentic Southern American atmosphere gives you a feeling that you are eating on the outskirts of Cartagena or Bogota. So, if you are ever looking for a place to treat yourself or others then I recommend stopping at La Chiva, the perfect place to fill your bellies and experience real Southern American cuisine at an affordable price.

MARIA'S EMPANADAS: Another small Southern American restaurant located on South Broadway and Louisiana. Maria's Empanadas is self-explanatory; this Argentinean establishment offers artisan made empanadas that taste like it came straight from Buenos Aires. This locally owned restaurant offers an authentic experience, from the moment you walk in you receive a warm aroma of coffee and freshly baked dough. They offer a variety of empanadas from beef and cheese to breakfast style, there is even a vegan option to satisfy all those who come. For an affordable price you can also refresh yourself with one of their handmade cold-pressed juices.



AFRICAN GRILL AND BAR: If you have ever wondered what African food taste like, then the African Grill and Bar is for you, located on Kipling Parkway in Lakewood. This restaurant offers authentic cuisine associated with exceptionable service. There are many meals from the African culture, including a sampler with Spinach and Chicken. If you are new to African food entirely, then I recommend the "Akwaaba Plate" it is the welcome plate for those who have never experienced African cuisine, it includes spinach, plantains, rice, chicken, and various other ways to enjoy this entrée. This establishment also offers a selection of African beers that complement the many affordable meals at this lovely African restaurant.

The new year brings endless opportunities and even creates new slates for many people. Why not start the year out with supporting a small business that brings cultures from all around the world, right to your table. Not only do these establishments submerge you into the authentic culture they originate from, but they also bring an array of other experiences and opportunities for those looking to expand their taste buds.

***Disclaimer:** due to COVID, hours and service operations may vary. Contact establishment to clarify.

Websites:

<https://africangrilllakewood.com/menu> | <https://www.mariaempanada.com/> | <https://www.lachivacolombian.com/menu>

Michael Martinez | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

Virtual Hang Out Spot

Are you tired of staying at home, not being able to meet your friend? This article will provide a different way that you can hang out but virtually. One of the most popular spots that you may have heard of is Zoom. Zoom is not just for lecture. There are so many ways that you can use Zoom in a more fun and enjoyable ways.

If you are stressed with finals and need a study buddy, you can use zoom to talk and share idea with each other. Zoom has a feature where you can share the screen with your friends. This is a great opportunity to watch Netflix or have a movie night with your friend; or if you want to share something interesting, you can share your screen as well.



Recently, there has been a new game called Among Us. What great about Among Us is that you can play with your friends or you can play with different people online. The game takes place in a space-themed setting. Players can take one of the two roles: crewmate or imposter. Throughout the game, the crewmates will be given tasks they have to finish before the imposter kills them all. If anybody finds a crewmate's dead body, they have to report it and agree on who to vote out of the ship. Crewmates have to finish all of their tasks before an imposter kills them.

Because people have to stay home so often, it can be very hard for people to interact. It may be even harder for some people because it makes them not want to talk at all. So having some type of interaction can be a little getaway from where we are right now. I know Zoom is mainly used for Zoom calls but be creative and let's make friends!!!

Patitta Banjongwit | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

Academic Deadlines Spring 2021

- ✓ January 18, 2021— Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday No Classes
- ✓ January 19, 2021— First Day of Spring semester courses
- ✓ January 19, 2021— Students will be able to sign up for the QuikPAY 3 payment plan.
- ✓ January 20, 2021— Auto-debit/auto-withdrawal for students on QuikPAY payment plan.
- ✓ January 24, 2021— Last day to waitlist classes using [UCDAccess](#).
- ✓ January 25, 2021— Last day to drop a class without a \$100 drop charge. All waitlists will be eliminated today.
- ✓ January 25, 2021— First day instructor approval may be required to add some classes.
- ✓ February 3, 2021— Census
- ✓ February 3, 2021— Last day to add classes in UCDAccess.
- ✓ February 3, 2021— [Last day to add classes with instructor consent on the Schedule Adjustment form.](#)
- ✓ February 3, 2021— Last day to drop classes with a financial adjustment (before 5pm).
- ✓ February 3, 2021— Classes dropped after 5pm will appear on your transcript with a grade of 'W'
- ✓ February 3, 2021— Full tuition will be charged for additional classes added after 5pm. College Opportunity Fund hours will not be deducted from eligible student's lifetime hours.
- ✓ February 3, 2021— Last day to apply for Spring graduation via [UCDAccess](#). After this date, contact your advisor.
- ✓ February 3, 2021— Last day to request or cancel Grade Forgiveness.
- ✓ February 5, 2021— Spring tuition and fee due date.
- ✓ February 8, 2021— Post E-Bills online for students who have any new or unpaid charges. Late and service charges applied to student accounts with previous term past due balances.
- ✓ February 18, 2021— Last day to sign up for QuikPAY 3 payment plan.
- ✓ February 19, 2021— QuikPAY 2 payment plan open for enrollment.

**DON'T
FORGET!**

Champurrado Recipe

Ingredients:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of Maseca corn flour
- 8 cups of warm water
- 2 Mexican chocolate tablets (Chocolate Abuelita)
- 5 oz. of piloncillo cane or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of brown sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick



Instructions:

1. In a large saucepan, add the 6 cups of warm water along with the cinnamon stick and the 5 oz piloncillo cane. Heat until it starts boiling then reduce the heat and let it simmer for about 10 minutes until the piloncillo has melted. However, if you decide to use regular brown sugar, it will take about 4 minutes to dissolve.
2. After the piloncillo or regular brown sugar has dissolved, add the 2 Mexican chocolate tablets and let it dissolve for 5 minutes. Make sure to stir from time to time.
3. In the meantime, in a medium bowl, pour the other 2 cups of warm water and the Maseca corn flour. Mix and whisk frequently to prevent lumps from forming and until it creates a very creamy texture.
4. Once the chocolate has completely melted, slowly pour the corn flour mixture you made in the medium bowl into the large saucepan while stirring to make sure there are no clumps. In order to avoid corn flour clumps, I suggest using a strainer to pour the mixture.
5. Turn the heat to medium-high until the champurrado starts boiling, and then reduce the heat to low to maintain a quiet simmer while stirring constantly. You will notice that your mixture will thicken after 6-8 minutes.
6. Allow to cook for 5 more minutes and then carefully serve, since its thick consistency keeps the drink very hot. Enjoy! :)

Alexa Dominguez-Estrella | TRIO SSS Office Assistant

DIY: Compliment Jar

Hello TRIO SSS participants!

I hope you all enjoyed your Winter break, and you had a great start to the New Year. With the New Year, some of us may have committed to a new year's resolution. A resolution for the New Year can vary from self-love to never losing your motivation throughout the school year. I recently came across a DIY compliment jar. The compliment jar is filled with various compliments that can be pulled from the jar at any time. The compliment jar is great if you even need a pick-me-up. A compliment jar is convenient to have on your desk or somewhere in your room. A compliment jar can be made for yourself, a friend, family member, or coworker.

SUPPLIES

1. Paper- can be white or colored printing paper, or notebook paper
2. A mason jar with a lid
3. Scissors
4. Markers or pen
5. Ribbon, stickers, anything to decorate the jar

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Write out at least 20 compliments you would like to read about yourself. You can always write out more than 20 compliments. *20 compliments can be 20 motivational quotes. You can visit Brainy Quotes to find a large list of quotes at: <https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/motivational-quotes>.
2. Cut out the compliments and fold them.
3. Decorate the Mason jar by adding a ribbon or any decorations to the jar.
4. Once you are done decorating the jar to your liking, add the folded-up compliments into the jar.
5. Place jar where you think is best.

*If you do not want to write out the compliments, you can type them and print them.



Carol Combs | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

Upcoming Events

JOB SEARCH WORKSHOP

Are you ready to find an internship or a job? Do you know how? Job search skills are key in finding the right job for you. In these two workshops you will learn how to network, best practices when job searching or using job boards, and understanding your background for a job search. Please join us to learn more!

When:

February 4th, 2020:

Understanding & Translating you background for a Job Search

March 4th, 2020:

Job Searching Strategies

Time: 12:00pm—1:00pm

Location: Zoom

Register at: <https://bit.ly/2LYSIhJ>



MOCK INTERVIEWS

DATE: April 1, 2021
Time: 12:00pm — 1:00pm

Space is Limited!

REGISTER At: <https://bit.ly/2Kell1Wg>

For more information contact:
daniela.castorena@ucdenver.edu

Practice Makes Perfect

Seek Improvement

Develop Interview Skills

Gain Confidence Interviewing



Director's Corner

Dear SSS Students,

Welcome back! I hope you had a restful and rejuvenating holiday break. The SSS professional staff, peer mentors, and I are thrilled to have you back and look forward to helping you reach your personal and academic goals this semester. We are excited to premiere a couple of new workshops this semester, so please be on the lookout for these in our monthly calendars.

Personally, the start of a new year encourages me to reflect on the previous year and re-assess my goals and directions. If you're not one to set goals for the academic year, I encourage you to try it this semester. Justin Shrader, SSS Peer Mentor, has an excellent article on S.M.A.R.T. goals; please make sure you check it out. Additionally, academic goal setting is something you may want to discuss with your coordinator or peer mentor. Not only can our team help you set goals, but we can function as your goal accountability partners. What are some things you would like to achieve this semester? Perhaps you would like to find a summer internship, get more involved on campus, or get better at completing assignments well before the deadline. Whatever your goal(s) may be, our team is happy to help.

Finally, I want to congratulate all of the SSS participants who earned a book scholarship last semester. Hooray! To qualify for the book scholarship, participants must:

- 1) Meet with a peer mentor at least two times per semester.
- 2) Meet with the professional staff at least two times per semester.
- 3) Attend at least one skill-building workshops per semester.
- 3) Complete one financial literacy session per semester.
- 4) Be in good academic standing

I hope you will all strive to meet the book scholarship requirements this semester. I wish you a great start to the new semester!

Be safe and be well.

Sonia Valencia
Director, TRIO SSS & McNair



Whether or not you reach your goals in life depends entirely on how well you prepare for them and how badly you want them."

~ Dr. Ronald E. McNair

January Workshop Calendar

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Please register for the workshops. You will find the links below the calendar. If you have any issues please contact professional staff. The TRIO SSS staff does not have control of outside workshop registrations but we can definitely try to help. Also, keep in mind that Non-TRIO workshops are subject to change.				
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19 	20	21	22
25 ¹ College Survival 101 10:00 am—11:00 am	26 ² TRIO SSS Financial Literacy: Managing your Finances 10:00 am — 11:00am	27 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Now <input type="checkbox"/> Later <input type="checkbox"/> Someday <input type="checkbox"/> Soon ³ TRIO SSS Now or later? Procrastination 11:00 am—12:00 pm	28 ⁴ Wellness & Recreation Financial Literacy : How to Budget for the Semester? 11:00am—12:00pm ² TRIO SSS Financial Literacy: Savings Strategies and Retirement 3:00 pm — 4:00 pm	29 ³ TRIO SSS Yoga at Your Desk & Mindfulness 9:00 am —10:00 am 

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Please make sure to fill out the evaluation after workshop by using this link: <http://bit.ly/2Wtio87>.

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

¹Learning Resource Center Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: <https://www.ucdenver.edu/learning-resources-center/resources>

²TRIO SSS Financial Literacy: Registration Required: RSVP at: <https://bit.ly/3rkHBVa>

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

⁴Wellness & Recreation Financial Literacy Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: <https://www.ucdenver.edu/wellness/matters/financial-wellness>

“Mindfulness is a way of befriending ourselves and our experiences”

~ Jon Kabat-Zinn