

THE PILLAR

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE TRIO SSS COMMUNITY

"Helping Students Realize Their Full Potential"



March 2021 ISSUE

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small steps every day

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT — BRENDA ASTORGA

TRIO Student Support Services Program is delighted to highlight Brenda Astorga in this edition of the newsletter. Brenda will be receiving her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Accounting and a minor in Communication. After graduation, her short-term goals include enrolling in graduate school and completing her 150 credits for her CPA exam. Her long-term goals include earning her CPA license and working for a public accounting firm. Brenda loved her college experience. As a first-generation student, college opened her world. Brenda says, "I met new people and made more friends. I

became more independent and learned how to balance school and work at the same time. I worked two part-time jobs and maintained a fulltime student status. I worked because I wanted to be able to pay for my tuition and books. I am thankful both of my jobs were flexible with my schedule. When work was slow, my boss would let me work on my homework. During finals week. I came into the office and reserved a conference room for my study time. My boss would not let anyone come into the conference room to give me work. I had some challenges along the way and moments where I felt I would not be successful. I am glad I never gave up, and I'm thankful I had my parents' support every step of the way." Brenda faced many challenges throughout her undergraduate ca-



reer. One of her biggest challenges was staying motivated when things got hard. She recalls, "My path wasn't the traditional four-year track. It has taken me six years to earn my undergraduate degree. I also struggled with studying for exams. Before college, I was used to studying for a couple of hours and still passing my exams. In college, however, I realized it does not work that way. I had to dedicate days to my studies to feel fully prepared for exams. I tried many study habits until I found the right one for me. The best way for me to study is to teach the material to someone else."

Despite her challenges, Brenda pushed through until the end. Her favorite college memory is her audit internship at Plante Moran. She states, "I enjoyed my internship so much. I got to meet people from various colleges and work with different personalities. My favorite part about this internship was when all the summer interns went to Chicago, Illinois, to learn more about Plante Moran and connect with interns from different offices. It was my first time visiting Chicago, and I fell in love with the city. During this internship, I shadowed my partner coach as she presented the audit to the client. It was the first time I saw the end of an audit that summer." One thing Brenda wishes someone told her about college was not to be afraid to fail.

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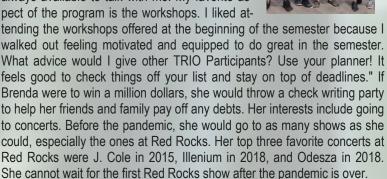
Student Spotlight—Continued

She says, "I failed my first class in college, and I thought the world was ending. I felt I was not cut out for college. I wanted to take a break after so many classes that did not count. I was so focused on my failures and ignored how far I have come. I am glad my parents pushed me to stay in school and retake the courses as many times as I needed. Everyone's journey is different; finishing college in four years is not realistic for some of us, and that's okay!"

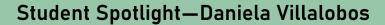
Brenda was asked to reflect on how TRIO has helped her and to share advice with other TRIO participants. She goes on to say, "TRIO helped me stay motivated in college. It was nice having someone to talk to about the challenges of going to college. I never felt like I was alone. TRIO guided me to the right resources to make



sure I was successful. I am thankful Daniela was always available to talk with me. My favorite aspect of the program is the workshops. I liked at-



TRIO SSS wishes Brenda the best of luck in her future endeavors.





The TRIO SSS Program is also happy to spotlight Daniela Villalobos in this month's newsletter. She will be graduating this semester with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics and minor in Finance. She has been an active participant in the program since fall 2017. Daniela mentioned that she has never struggled in math and it has always come easily for her until she started taking higher-level math courses. She stated, "I had to change the way I did things because what I did before no longer worked. I had to get used to asking questions and asking for help." As for her academics, she noted that they started off great in the beginning but has struggled as she progressed but is still good. Additionally, she is a participant in the TRIO McNair Scholars program. Her presentation on, "New Ways of Teaching y=mx+b, - Youth Education = Methods (Xplanation) + Behavior" centers on researching barriers within math education.

When asked about her college journey, Daniela mentioned that her overall experience has been great. Working in the CU Denver Pre-Collegiate program, being a member of the TRIO SSS and TRIO McNair Scholars program, she met some amazing people

and made some wonderful memories. She is grateful to have the opportunity to build these relationships and could not thank them enough for being part of her life. She stated, "It is a family outside of home. They made being a first-generation student so much better, so much support and love. There were some struggles along the way, but I got a lot of support especially from the groups above." She wished she was told when she started college to enjoy it more because it goes by so fast. She stated, "It seems like yesterday I was still in my first-year. Meet people, make as many connections as you can, and keep them." The TRIO SSS program was part of Daniela's network. She mentioned, "Whenever I needed help, I know I can go to them; they are so helpful and nice. Do not be afraid to come in. They are an amazing resource to have and have amazing individuals working there that you can talk to."

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Student Spotlight—Continued



Her favorite memory in college is working for the CU Denver Pre-Collegiate program, which helps high school students on their route to college. Specifically, she noted her experience with the Summer Program where she was able to help students with math. Daniela stated, "It is something that I love to do. I love being able to help those students out and getting to know them. Along with working with an amazing team." Her short-term goals include passing her math classes and having a better idea of what she wants



to do after college. She would also like to stick to her schedule of running three times a week. She stated, "It hurts but I need to stay active. She is thinking about her option to attend graduate school for the future. Prior to meeting this goal, she would like to work and see what is out there so that she can gather a better idea of what she wants to do.

Her hobbies include painting, crocheting, baking, and cooking. If she won a million dollars, she would find ways to invest her money to watch it grow. Once this is accomplished, she would help her parents pay off their house, purchase a car for her dad, and put money towards her sibling's tuition. Her blood type "b+" coincides with her life motto of "Be Positive." She noted, "There are so many issues and problems in life, it is important to surround yourself with people that love and care about you because they are the ones that show you just how good life is, and make you look at life with a much more colorful perspective." It is these people that help you be positive. Indeed, in a world with much negativity, we need to be positive. The TRIO SSS program wishes Daniela a happy graduation. Woo Hoo! You did it!

International Women's Day



People around the world celebrate International Women's Day (IWD)- annually on March 8th. The day has been designated a national holiday in many parts of the world since 1975, when the United Nations named it an official observance. The origins of IWD center around the socialist movements of the early 20th century. In honor of the anniversary of strikes by women garment workers in NYC, the Socialist Party of America led a National Women's Day on February 28, 1909. The idea to turn the day into an international movement advocating universal suffrage was established at the International Conference of Working Women in 1910, spearheaded by Clara Zetkin. The day took on a revolutionary form in 1917 Russia. Russian women demanded and gained the right to vote that year, making it the first major power to enact suffrage legislation for women, a year earlier than Britain and three years earlier than the United States. Suffragettes across the world looked to Russia as an example for a country's progress in women's liberation, aware of their own government's trailing. Women's movements undoubtedly have an international connection. Since its establish-

ment, IWD is one for celebration and protest- with its deep legacy in the struggle for women's rights. This year's theme is 'choose to challenge' with the statement that "a challenged world is an alert world and from challenge comes change." International Women's Day calls for individuals to celebrate women's achievement, raise awareness against bias, and to act against inequality.

Resources:

https://time.com/5187268/international-womens-day-history/https://www.internationalwomensday.com/

Zaira Flores | TRIO SSS Graduate Assistant

National Certified Nurses Day: One Year After COVID



Remember what life was like before COVID? Just a year ago, my biggest concern was if I could make it to class on time and getting good grades on my papers. I would never have imagined that one year in the future, I would be taking courses entirely online and be trying to get through school during a global pandemic. I will never forget the day that the World Health Organization declared COVID a pandemic. At the end of my Family Communication class, I looked down at my phone and stared in shock as the notifications said, "COVID-19 Declared Pandemic According to the WHO". I quickly showed my friend while still trying to wrap my head around the idea that this was really happening. As I

walked out into the hallway, where I usually bump shoulders with other students coming to and from class, I realized how empty the halls were and felt eerie. In the coming months, I began to appreciate the small things more, especially the nurses working hard to save people's lives.

On March 19th, the nation celebrates "National Certified Nurses Day" where national certification boards, healthcare providers, and nursing education facilities recognize the work that nurses do. This year, nurses have been through a lot, to put it very mildly, and I think they deserve recognition by everyone. I had the honor of interviewing Maria, a former ER nurse at a Denver hospital who worked in the ER at the beginning of the pandemic. She recalls watching the virus spread across the world and being concerned about its arrival in Colorado. When she asked the hospital administration what plans were being put into action to prepare for what was coming, she was told there weren't any. "ER nurses are tough." We will face it when it comes," she remembered thinking. Then the virus exploded in Italy, where doctors and nurses worked long hours in full protective gear. The fear that Maria's hospital didn't have enough protective equipment began to set in, and with no plan being put in motion, all she could do was wait. Then COVID arrived. She



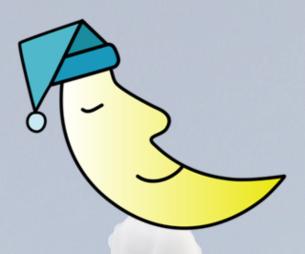
was told that she was essential and had to come to work, but she was concerned about exposing her family to the virus. It wasn't long before she started showing symptoms of COVID herself and then her family as well. While the official results came back negative for COVID, she isn't convinced that it wasn't COVID. She decided the best thing for her and her family was to transfer out of the ER.

When I asked Maria what she hopes people learned from this pandemic, she said she hopes people realize now, "I don't do my job in a vacuum. I work with other doctors, pharmacies, etc.. If one isn't working well, it destroys the whole thing." She expressed feelings of guilt because she didn't become a nurse to be a hero and that, in reality, it's a whole team of people, not just nurses, that are doing all they can to help their patients. At the same time, nurses have been "under crushing stress" this year, and she hopes that her nurses will ask for help when they need it. She also had this message for nursing students, "Be prepared, don't let it [COVID] destroy your career or burn you out. Nursing school is far different from the real world."

The time will come where things will go back to normal. The memories of lockdowns, overflowing ICUs, and social distancing will be just a memory. We must remember those nurses and other healthcare professionals that were there for us during this time. On March 19th, I encourage you to take the time and thank a nurse and do something to show your appreciation for the sacrifices they have made to care for COVID patients.

Justin Shrader | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

Sleep Awareness Week: March 8-14, 2021



Sleep. We all enjoy getting some sleep, even if it may not be the amount we want. Depending on our responsibilities for the week, our sleep schedule may range from 0-12 hours per day. A few reasons why we stay up late may be due to work, school, and family. Knowing that we need an average of 7-9 hours of sleep,² we put sleep at the bottom of our list.

Sleep Awareness Week is a spotlight for sleep. March 8-14th is a reminder about the importance of sleep and to keep us informed about maintaining a well-rounded sleeping routine.² Every week, most adults feel tired 3 out of 7 days.² Although some of us feel tired, we continue with the same sleep schedule and ignore our tiredness.

Sleep is essential to our health. It helps with our quality of life, mental health, and physical health.1 As children, sleep helps with growth and development.¹ When we do not receive enough sleep, we experience effects from sleep deprivation. Sleep deprivation can cause our reaction time to decrease, experience irrational behavior, poor physical and mental health.¹

The amount of sleep we lose during the week is called our sleep debt.1 We may believe we can make up for the amount of sleep we lost, but we actually can't. Naps help to function better throughout the day, but you do not receive the full benefits sleeping does.

Here are some approaches that can help your sleeping habits:

- Maintain the same sleep schedule wake up and go to bed at the same time every day.
- An hour before bed, avoid distractions such as using your phone, computer, and watching t.v.
- Avoid caffeine in the late afternoons.
- Keep your room dark and cool!



References

- 1. NIH. (2020). Sleep Deprivation and Deficiency. https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/sleep-deprivation-and-deficiency.
- 2. Sleep Foundation. (2021). *Sleep Awareness Week*. https://www.sleepfoundation.org/press-release/sleep-awareness-week-2020.

Carol Combs | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

FREE Things to do in Denver

Often the pandemic makes it challenging to get out and see the world around us. From quarantine and social distancing recommendations to mask mandates, the world we once knew is gone, and the way everyday life is conducted has changed significantly. However, this does not mean we cannot enjoy ourselves and have fun, especially with spring approaching. Below is a list containing fun, interesting, in-person, and free events in and around the Denver metro area that are seasonal and year-round.

DENVER US MINT OPEN YEAR-ROUND:

If you are interested in coins and the history of coinage, then the Denver US Mint is the place to be. One of only six mints in the US, the free 45-min tour offers a unique chance to learn about the history of currency production currency while observing where and how the coins are made. If you ever want something interesting and educational to do throughout the week, stop by and join the free tours from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm.

COLORADO DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

This seasonal festival offers competitive boat racing across Sloan's Lake. This extraordinary festival honors the Chinese Duanwu festival with exciting boat races, performing arts, Asian marketplaces, and even arts and crafts where people can engage in hands-on projects like knitting and cooking and increase their cultural awareness. This year the festival will take place on September 25 - 26, 2021. You do not want to miss the tasty food showcasing or the traditional lion dance. Make sure to be there for the interactive events like the ramen eating



contest or the dance instruction. This event is fun and exciting for all ages, so mark your calendars because you do not want to skip this fantastic free opportunity to submerge yourself in the multicultural event.

HAMMOND'S CANDIES

Free candy! If you need to satisfy that sweet tooth, then Hammond's Candies is the perfect place for you. Hammond's Candies has become one of the most renowned candy factories around. Originating in Denver over 100 years ago, Hammond's Candies has grown into an international distributor sending flavorful candy worldwide. You can in-



dulge in this free tour showing you how their favorite sweet treats are made. Along the way, guests are educated on the history of the candies and the candies themselves. This free tour is available Monday through Saturday. It is conducted every half hour, so if you are ever in the neighborhood and want to fulfill that childhood dream of visiting the chocolate factory, here is your chance.

For more information about these events and others around the city please visit this website.: https://www.denver.org/things-to-do/itineraries/free-activities/

* Please be cautious and mind the pandemic rules and recommendations such as social distancing and mask requirements. Also, if you are feeling sick in any way or form, please reframe from attending these events until you are better.

Michael Martinez | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

Brain Injury Awareness Month



Since 1993, March has been observed as National Brain Injury Awareness Month. The 2021 - 2023 campaign theme is **#MoreThanMyBrainInjury** and seeks to increase understanding of brain injury as a chronic condition and reduce the stigma associated with having a brain injury. Also, to showcase the community's injury diversity and demographics while improving care and support for brain injury individuals and their families.

Brain injuries are different for everyone. If you know anyone who had a brain injury, it is important to remember that they are a person first, and they are not their injury. It will require understanding and patience to support the person and treat the injury. There are two types of brain injuries. Traumatic brain injuries "occur as a result of motor vehicle

accidents, sports or recreational injuries, domestic violence, falls, and other external forces. Causes of Non-traumatic brain injuries begin internally due to disease, poisoning, a hereditary condition, lack of oxygen, stroke, or other internal medical condition."

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury usually caused by a blow to the head or a violent shake of the head and upper body. It is crucial to learn the signs of a concussion and to know when to seek medical attention as it could be the difference between a mild to a severe injury. One of the keys to recognizing a concussion and seeking emergency care is <u>identifying these symptoms</u>:

- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- A loss of consciousness lasting longer than 30 seconds
- A headache that gets worse over time
- Fluid or blood draining from the nose or ears
- Vision or eye disturbances, such as pupils that are bigger than normal (dilated pupils) or pupils of unequal sizes
- Ringing in the ears that doesn't go away
- Weakness in the arms or legs
- Appearing very pale for longer than an hour
- Changes in behavior
- Confusion or disorientation, such as difficulty recognizing people or places
- Slurred speech or other changes in speech
- Obvious difficulty with mental function or physical coordination
- Changes in physical coordination, such as stumbling or clumsiness
- Seizures or convulsions
- Lasting or recurrent dizziness
- Symptoms that worsen over time
- Large head bumps or bruises on areas other than the forehead in children, especially in infants under 12 months of age

At CU Denver, the Office of Disability Resources & Services assists students disabilities, including a disability caused by a brain injury, and helps them access the appropriate accommodations. Services include but are not limited to:

- Accommodation Letters
- Testing Accommodations
- Request Alternative/Electronic Textbooks
- Note-Taking Accommodations
- Assistive Technology Equipment Check-Out (Coming Soon)
- Resource Library (Coming Soon)

Additional Resources:

https://biacolorado.org/resource-navigation/

https://www.biausa.org/public-affairs/public-awareness/brain-injury-awareness

https://nationaldaycalendar.com/national-brain-injury-awareness-month-march/

Alexandria Joo | TRIO SSS and McNair Scholar Project Specialist

March DIY Craft

It is St. Patrick's month, the time to decorate with shamrocks, four leaf cloves, Leprechauns and pots of gold. Anything green! Learn how to make this adorable shamrock wreath made out of scrapbook paper following this small tutorial.

Materials Needed

- Scrap paper of different green shades and its preferable to be double sided. You can also
 glue two pieces together to make double sided paper and cut them into strips.
 - 7 of 12 x 2 strips of paper
 - 7 of 10 x 2 strips of paper
 - 7 of 8 x 2 strips of paper
- Extra scraps of paper for center decorations and back pieces
- Hot glue gun
- Ribbon to hang the shamrocks
- Little accordion fold medallion
- Small button



- **Step 1 :** Stack one of each size of the strips of paper together and glue them together on one end.
- Step 2: Loop the shortest piece of the strip paper which is the 8 inch over and glue the edge down.
- **Step 3:** Repeat step 2 with the other two pieces (10 and 12 in) of the strips of paper until you have a teardrop shape.

Step 4: Repeat step 2 and 3 until you make six tear drops. Then group them in twos and glue the ends of the tear drops together in order to form a heart shape.









Step 5: To make the stem you will be making two-fold marks with different sizes on each of the three strips of paper you have left.

- 12-inch strip: make a fold mark of 5 inches from the left edge and another 5 inches from the right edge, so that there are 2 inches between the two-fold lines and the section between the folds is centered.
- 10-inch strip: make a fold mark of 4.25 inches from the left and right edge, so that there are 11/2 inches between the two-fold lines and the section between the folds is centered.
- 8-inch strip: make one-fold mark of 3.5 inches from the left and right edge, so that there is 1 inch between the fold lines and the section between them is centered.

Step 6: Line up the ends and glue them all together as shown below:

Step 7: Now assemble your shamrock. You can cut out a small cardstock circle so that you can have something to glue all those points to. Then add a little accordion fold medallion along with a small button in the front center.

Step 8: Then finally, glue on a ribbon loop, so you can hang the wreath.







Alexa Dominguez-Estrella | TRIO SSS Office Assistant



Director's Corner

Dear SSS Students,

I hope your spring semester is going well and that you have settled into a routine that works well for you. As you move into midterms, please remember that our team is here to help you achieve academic success. Additionally, please take advantage of educational resources like tutoring at the LRC and the Writing Center. Our team is also committed to helping you set and achieve personal and professional goals. Whether you are deciding what your summer plans might look like (perhaps you're looking for summer work or a summer internship) or getting ready for life after your undergraduate studies, we can help!



Finally, I encourage you to be intentional about building connections and community with your peers and with fellow SSS participants. While our virtual setting creates unique challenges to meeting new people, I invite you to think about what opportunities it brings. For example, since being remote, I have had the opportunity to tune into free lectures and events hosted by entities outside of Colorado, something that might not have been possible otherwise. Zoom fatigue is real, and I can empathize with wanting to minimize screen time after being in back-to-back zoom meetings and lectures. Still, I wonder if there are opportunities that we might miss when events return to in-person formats. Of course, as we approach daylight savings and our days get longer, I look forward to the opportunity to spend more time outdoors. What are you looking forward to this coming spring?

Be safe and be well.
Sonia Valencia
Director, TRIO SSS & McNair

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!

- Congratulations to all of our SSS students who earned Dean's List last semester, Fall 2020:
 - Eh K Blue Lah with the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
 - Vanessa Barraza with the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
 - Kayla Medina with the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
 - Maria Mejia with the School of Education and Human Development
 - Jazmin Teran-Balbuena with the Business School
 - Astrid Flores with the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
- Judy Tran, McNair Scholar & SSS participant, was accepted into several graduate school programs.
- Natali Cadena recently started student employment position with the University Communications Department.
- Kathleen Le has been accepted to the 5-year Public Health Program.

<u>CONGRATULATIONS</u> and great job on your hard work.

Keep it up TRIO students and staff!

March Workshop Calendar

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	² Wellness & Recreation Financial Literacy: Saving and Emergency Funds 11:00 am—12:00 pm	3Team Work: Collaborating With Others 3:30 pm—4:30 pm 4Stress Less 5:00 pm—6:00 pm	4 ¹Job Searching Strategies 12:00 pm—1:00 pm ⁵Effective Resumes & Cover Letter 2:00 pm—2:50 pm ⁵Student Financial Services Financial Literacy: What is Financial Aid and How To Apply? 5:30 pm—6:30 pm	5
6Mid-Term Reality Check 10:00 am—11:00 am 5Writing a Literature Review 3:00 pm—3:50 pm	9 *Back To Basics: Effective Note-Taking 10:00 am—11:00 am	*Study Strategies for Remote Learning 12:30 pm—1:30 pm *Interrupting Bias 3:30 pm—4:30 pm *Manage Your Mood 5:00 pm—6:00 pm	11 1Pursuing Healthy Eating Habits 11:00 am—12:00 pm 7Student Financial Services Financial Literacy: Financial Aid and Verification 5:30 pm—6:30 pm	1Stress is a Mess 10:30 am—11:30 am
¹ Motivation and Goal Setting 11:00 am—12:00 pm	*Discover New Learning Strategies 10:00 am—11:00 am *Addressing the Slacker in Group Work 12:00 pm—1:00 pm *Arguments & Thesis Statements 1:00 pm—1:50 pm	17 ² Wellness & Recreation Financial Literacy: Saving for Retirement 11:00 am—12:00 pm ⁶ General Study Skills for New Students 12:30 pm—1:30 pm ³ Using Emotional Intelligence as a Student Leader 3:30 pm—4:30 pm	7Student Financial Services Financial Literacy: Special Circumstances: Appeal, Appeal 5:30 pm—6:30 pm	19
1Pandemic Talk 10:00 am—11:00 am	*Due Today ≠ Do Today: Avoid Procrastination 10:00 am—11:00 am Now Later Someday Soon	24 Take Control of Your Semester: Time Management 12:30 pm—1:30 pm Tackling Common Issues with English Grammar 3:00 pm—3:50 pm Imposter Syndrome 3:30 pm—4:30 pm	8TRIO & MidFirst Bank Financial Literacy: Understanding Your Credit Score 12:00 pm—1:00 pm	¹ Professional Effective Networking 3:00 pm—4:00 pm
1Professional Etiquette 9:00 am—10:00 am You can't say THAT to a customer!	6Wellness and Stress Management 10:00 am—11:00 am 2Wellness & Recreation Financial Literacy: The Art of Budgeting 11:00 am—12:00 pm	31 ¹Guided Goals to Relaxation 11:00 am—12:00 pm °Ace My Tests 12:30 pm—1:30 pm SWriting a C.V. 12:30 pm—1:50 pm ³The Power of I: Harnessing Your Inner Introvert 3:30 pm—4:30 pm	WORKSHOP EVALUATIONS Please be sure to complete the workshop evaluation after the workshop. You can access the form at: http://bit.ly/2Wtio87	

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

¹TRIO SSS Skill Building Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: https://bit.ly/2LYSIhJ

²Wellness & Recreation Services, Financial Literacy Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: https://www.ucdenver.edu/wellness/matters/financial-wellness

3Student Life LEAD Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: MyLynx.ucdenver.edu, under the Events Tab.

4Student and Community Counseling Center Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: 303-315-7270

⁵Writing Center Workshops: <u>Registration Required</u>: RSVP at: <u>https://clas.ucdenver.edu/writing-center/workshops</u>

⁶Learning Resource Center Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: https://www.ucdenver.edu/learning-resources-center/resources

7Student Financial Services, Financial Literacy Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: https://application.admissions.ucdenver.edu/portal/financialaidliteracy

8TRIO SSS, Financial Literacy Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: https://bit.ly/3rkhBVa