

THE PILLAR

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE TRIO SSS COMMUNITY

"Helping Students Realize Their Full Potential"



November 2020
ISSUE

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Believe in
Yourself
♥

Staff Spotlight— Zaira Nubia Flores



Hola comunidad and Namaste! My name is Zaira Nubia Flores [she/her(s)/ella], and I am grateful for the opportunity to join the TRIO community at CU Denver as a Graduate Student Assistant. I currently live in Arvada with my partner and two old mini-Schnoodles. A little backstory on my name- Zaira means rose in Arabic, Nubia is kind of like the Spanish word for clouds (nubes), and Flores means flowers in Spanish. I identify as a proud Latina/Mexican American(1st gen or 2nd gen)/Chicana and am bilingual in Spanish. I grew up in Brush, Colorado, and frequently visited my mother's side of my familia in Coahuila, Mexico. I am the older-middle child of 4 sisters and am a first-generation student.



My undergraduate involvement with TRIO truly made my journey in higher education possible. I attended Colorado State University, Fort Collins, thanks to the assistance of TRIO's 'Talent Search' program at my rural high school, where I was provided with support in submitting my college applications and received fee waivers. My high school to college transition was difficult because I was moving from my small town to what felt like an overwhelming "city". Luckily, I participated in TRIO's 'Bridge Scholars' program, where I was able to live in a residence hall and take two courses immediately following high school graduation. This opportunity, along with my participation in TRIO's 'Academic Advancement Center' at CSU (a program like ours- where I was connected to various academic and social support services), were crucial factors in my success at CSU. I am thankful for these experiences with CSU faculty, the 'El Centro' office, and the 'Pride Resource Center' because I found a supportive community that drove my willingness to continue in my educational journey. In 2017 I graduated with my B.S in psychology with a clinical/counseling concentration.

Continued on next page...

Spotlight Continued

In the Fall of 2019, I began my current graduate program at CU Denver to pursue an M.A. in counseling psychology with a clinical mental health concentration. My dream is to become a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and begin a private practice where I can provide counseling through a holistic/mind-body-spirit approach- I like the existential/narrative/humanistic theoretical orientations. I am passionate about mindful movement and am a yoga teacher; additionally, I do all the Colorado-y things and love to spend time outdoors, running, hiking, hula-hooping, or rock climbing. I adore live music (and miss it dearly- my partner plays in a local band in FoCo) and am a Grateful Dead 'deadhead', jam-band, jazz, funk, bluegrass, etc. fan.



In my new role, I hope to provide care and support to students in navigating challenges and barriers, as I was once provided support with TRIO services. I am deeply committed to student success, and it is my desire to assist students in achieving their personal, academic, and professional dreams. I am looking forward to meeting and working with you all!

Con mucho orgullo y gratitude,

Zaira Flores | TRIO SSS Graduate Assistant

Study Skills



Study skills are honestly one of the most discussed topics in your college experiences. Sometimes, it can be tedious, but trust me, it is crucial while you are in college. Study skills are about making sure that you maximize the time spent studying and using the right technique for the task. For this November Newsletter, I want to share some of my study skills and how they have affected my learning experiences.

First of all, with everything that is going on right now, it can be tough to concentrate. Procrastination is probably an obstacle many of us are struggling with. Being stuck at home, wearing pajamas can impact motivation. I, too, sometimes have a hard time concentrating and lack the drive to get my school work done.

I have realized that environment can impact my focus and productivity. Rather than studying in the same place, I will go to the living room or someplace with lots of sunlight if I notice that I feel uninspired. Changing space is a great way to refresh your mind and not get stuck in one spot. I have heard that the kitchen table is especially conducive to studying. Time management is another key to developing effective study skills. I use a rewards system to help me manage my time. I think of studying as a task, and when I'm done with that task, I get a reward. For example, I reward myself with TV shows or a snack after studying for two hours. The Forest app, which was reviewed in last month's newsletter, has really helped me focus on the task at hand. The purpose of the app is to grow a forest by sustained focus, and breaking focus can result in the death of one of the trees you have grown.



Quizlet is one of the techniques I use to prepare for tests. Quizlet helps make studying fun. In my entrepreneurship class, my classmates and I created a google doc study sheet that allowed us to study as a group. Study groups are very useful; I was able to talk to my classmates about topics with which I was struggling. These are some of the study techniques that have been most effective during this challenging time. I hope I have provided some new study skills techniques for everyone to try!

Patitta Banjongwit | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

Historia De Día de Muertos

Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is a unique tradition that has been practiced through many centuries. As many know, Día de los Muertos is the day of celebrating life with family and friends through festivities and dancing. Many examples throughout history and even pop culture portray a public image of día de los Muertos. Whether it be the colorful skulls and skeletons or scenes in international movies such as the 2015 James Bond movie: Spectre, which incorporated Mexico's Día de los Muertos celebration into the opening scene. Or other films like Pixar's Coco, which exhibit a more traditional and meaningful image. Although these films may be great, there is more to Día de los Muertos than either Spectre or Coco could ever portray.



The history of Día de los Muertos goes back thousands of years. Originally celebrated in the southern and central regions of modern-day Mexico, Día de los Muertos derives from indigenous Aztecs that prayed to the Queen of Mictlan or "lady of the dead." It is believed that the Aztecs prayed to this queen so she could protect the bones of the past lives so they could be used to make a new life in the living world. Every year the queen returns to the living world where she is celebrated with dances and festivals to protect those that have passed on from the living world. Today, Día de los Muertos is celebrated quite differently than the way Aztecs did thousands of years ago, and this is due to the direct influence of the Spanish conquistadors.



In the 16th- Century, Spain had already begun sending conquistadors worldwide to explore and conquer new territory. It was not long after that the Spaniards began to influence and change customs and traditions altogether, and the ancient Aztec tradition was no exception. Many of the main customs and practices that are associated with Día de los Muertos were influenced by the Spanish due to syncretism and Catholicism. Originally, the Aztecs prayed for the whole month of August until the Spanish merged Día de los Muertos with the Catholic holiday "All Saint's and Souls day," which is November 2nd. When the Spanish conquered the Aztecs, they began to directly change their culture and traditions through cultural genocide. The Spanish merged their own traditions and

beliefs that aligned with Catholicism and forced the Indigenous people to follow. The Spanish influence on Día de los Muertos runs through centuries; images of colorful skeletons and skulls, decorated ofrendas (offerings), as well as portraits and drawings of La Calavera Catrina are displayed during the festivities, showing the influence is still felt to this day.

On Día de los Muertos the Aztecs and indigenous people prayed to the "Queen of the dead" to protect the ones who have passed on from the living. Today it is honored as a celebration of life for the ones who have passed. Although this special tradition and celebration has expanded across the globe and through countless generations and cultures, Día de los Muertos is still a prominent staple in the Mexican culture.

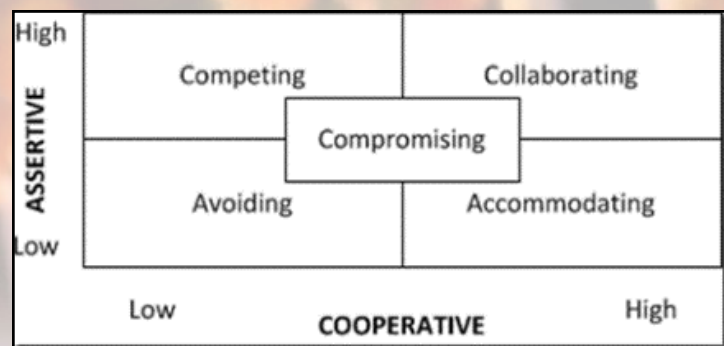


Michael Martinez | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

Navigating Conflict During the Holidays

The holiday season is quickly approaching, and for many, that means more time spent with family and friends. While the holidays can be a time to cherish, it can also be a time ripe for conflict with people you love. Conflicts that can revolve around politics, religion, life decisions, or several other topics that can take you by surprise, so it's best to think about how you will approach them in advance. People take five approaches to conflict, but this article will only focus on the three most common at holiday gatherings: avoidance, accommodating, and competing. By the time you have finished this article, you should identify each of the approaches and understand some of the relational impacts that can occur based on which approach you choose.

Navigating Conflict



Imagine you are at a holiday gathering, and your parents decide to bring up politics. You have had many conversations with your parents about politics, mostly around how your views differ, and you don't want to engage. You decide to ignore the comment or walk out of the room because you know that if you stay an argument could start and get out of hand. In this case, you have chosen the **avoidance** approach, and as the name suggests, you have avoided any confrontation. Avoidance is usually most useful for small arguments like the example above, but if this is how major conflicts are approached in your family or friend groups it can create an unspoken animosity in the relationship and can lead to slowly cutting off the relationship.

Think of the **accommodating** approach to conflict as those times when someone says, "why do you let them treat you like that" or "why do you let them walk all over you." This approach is characterized by one person's low assertiveness for themselves and their interests. Often what is going through someone's mind when they choose the accommodating approach is that the desire to preserve the current state of the relationship is a top priority. The effect that this approach has on a relationship can be very similar to the avoidance style. However, if this is a default approach, they can get the reputation of being a push over, and sometimes even family and friends will unashamedly use it to their advantage.

The final approach to conflict that we will talk about is called the **competing** approach. This is what most people think of when they think of conflict because this approach is the most dramatic. Competing is where one or more people have very low concern for the other person or the relationship's future. It can involve yelling, name-calling, or saying things that they know will hurt the other person with the goal of "winning" the argument. This kind of approach to conflict can cause the most dramatic change in a relationship because the depth of offense that is possible can cause someone to instantly decide to entirely cut their friend or family member out of their life.

I hope that you keep these approaches to conflict in mind during the holiday season, and you have the wisdom to know which one to use at the right time and in the right circumstances. The hardest thing to internalize is that not all conflict is bad, and it can often bring much needed growth and change to a relationship that leads to a deeper and more honest relationship. Even though this holiday season will look different from every other one, I hope you and yours have a peaceful and enjoyable holiday season.

Justin Shrader | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week: November 15th - 22nd

Food insecurity is defined as “limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (Payne-Sturges et al., 349). Food insecurity may cause harmful effects on physical and mental health. A few examples are increased mental health problems, depression, diabetes, obesity, hypertension, and sleep (Payne-Sturges et al., 350).

Statistics from Feeding America, in 2019:

- 34 million people were living in poverty in the U.S.
- 35 million people are experiencing food insecurity

Statistics from National Alliance to End Homelessness, in 2019:

- 567,715 are experiencing homelessness in the U.S.
- 9,619 are experiencing homelessness in Colorado



Since the pandemic, food insecurity has risen to 54 million (Feeding America, 2020). The Coronavirus pandemic has caused many difficulties amongst individuals and more so for those who live in poverty. In 1975, the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness (NSCAHH) was created to help those who are experiencing hunger and homelessness and help bring awareness towards these issues (HHweek, 2018). The goal of NSCAHH is to educate, engage, and train students to become advocates and develop long-term solutions (HHweek, 2018).

Here are some ways to participate with NSCAHH:

- Organize [Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week](#) on campus.
- Join their [fundraising efforts to support people affected by the recent series of hurricanes](#).
- Help [end hunger and food insecurity on campus](#).
- Download their [research and toolkits](#).
- [Ask to help plan your next big project to end hunger and homelessness](#).
- Donate

CU Denver Resources



CU Denver Mobile Food Pantry - Food distribution hands out pre-made food boxes starting at 9 AM-10:30 AM.

- Tues., Nov. 10th - Located at Walnut Lot, West 4th Street, across From Lynx Crossing (Campus Village)
- Tues., Nov. 24th - Located at the Community College of Aurora-Lowery Campus, 1070 Alton Way

CU Denver students who volunteer for at least 3 hours are rewarded a 20-pound food credit. Students can then choose any agency to donate the food credit. For more information, visit the [Food Bank of the Rockies](#) website.

CU Denver's Wellness Center Food Pantry

You can visit CU Denver's Food Pantry located at CU Denver's Wellness Center on the third floor. CU Denver's Food Pantry also accepts food donations. Hours of operation:

- Monday - Friday: 12 pm - 6 pm
- Saturday & Sunday: Closed

Denver Shelter and Housing

[Denver the Mile-High City](#) website helps people find a day or night shelter and other services such as rental or utility assistance.

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- Payne-Sturges, D. C., Tjaden, A., Caldeira, K. M., Vincent, K. B., & Arria, A. M. (2017;2018;). Student hunger on campus: Food insecurity among college students and implications for academic institutions. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 32(2), 349-354.

Carol Combs | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

DIY: Turkey Day

As the turkey days approach, notable DIY projects could be a nice distraction while the food is cooking. One easy project would be to create a decorative twine bottle using leftover wine bottles, twine, hot glue, and fabric flowers. It is a low-cost project, and most of the materials can be found in your local crafting store.

First, draw glue in a circle and start unraveling your twine and slowly wrap the twine around the bottle. Different colors of twine will give your bottle more pizzazz and thanksgiving spirit. Wrapping the bottle tightly will keep the twine secure and prevent any gaps from appearing. Hot glue can be used every third or fourth wrap to increase the adhesion of the twine. When the twine reaches the top of the bottle, step one is done. Congratulate yourself and adorn the twine bottle with flowers, ribbons, bows, or beads of your choice.



Raj Patel | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

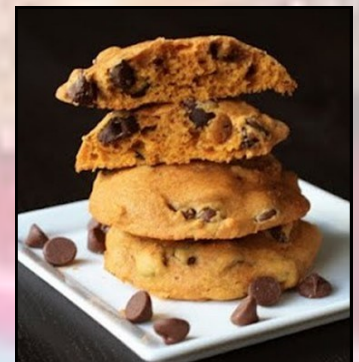
Recipe: Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients

- 1 cup Canned Pumpkin
- 1 cup of Sugar
- ½ cup of Vegetable oil
- 1 Egg
- 2 cups of All-Purpose Flour
- 2 teaspoons of Baking powder
- 2 teaspoons of Ground Cinnamon
- ½ Teaspoon of Salt
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 2 Cups of Semi-sweet Chocolate Chips
- ½ Cups Chopped walnuts or Almonds (Optional)

Directions

1. Combine pumpkin, sugar, vegetable oil, and egg. In a separate bowl, stir together flour, baking powder, ground cinnamon, and salt. Dissolve the baking soda with the milk and stir in. Add flour mixture to pumpkin mixture and mix well.
2. Add vanilla, chocolate chips, and nuts.
3. Drop by spoonful on a greased cookie sheet and bake at 350 ° F for approximately 10 minutes or until lightly brown and firm



Carlos Guillen | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor

FREE Things To Do in Denver

Are you looking for affordable ways to unwind after a long week of classes and studying? Below are a list of free virtual and in-person activities for the month of November.

43rd Annual Denver Film Festival (Oct. 22nd – Nov. 8th, 2020)

The Denver Film Festival is the largest premier film celebration in the Rocky Mountain Region. Hosted by Denver Film Society, which works to promote film as both an art form and a civic forum, the festival showcases blockbusters, documentaries, shorts and independent films at a variety of venues around the city. This year's event will be virtual.



Abstract Paintings- Tracey Russel (Oct. 23rd – Nov. 8th, 2020)

Tracey Russel's recent abstract expressionist work is based upon her perceived awareness of the natural environment. She recaptures the subtle mystery or "numinosity" of nature on a 2-dimensional pieces of birch panel.

Denver Arts Week (Nov. 6-8th, 2020)

This is an annual celebration of all thing's art in The Mile-High City, featuring events at a wide variety of art galleries, museums, theaters and concert halls. Due to COVID-19, Denver Arts Week 2020 will pivot to a weekend focus.

Urban Holiday Market (Nov. 7th-8th, 2020)

This two-day, open-air holiday market in the heart of downtown Denver is the place to get all of your gift shopping done in one fun-filled weekend. Browse an eclectic collection of local art, crafts, holiday gift, specialty foods and much more.

A is for.... At the Denver Art Museum (Nov. 1st - 30th, 2020)

Explore local artist Chinn Wang's installation titled A is for..., a free interactive experience that will run throughout Martin Plaza, located in front of the Denver Art Museum. Chinn Wang's art practice employs invented visual languages and symbolic iconography to examine, problematize, and humorize the subjective nature of personal narrative and history. Visitors are encouraged to discover their own connections between identity, narrative, symbol, and language.

Afro Cuban – Dance Practice in the park (Nov. 1st- Nov. 29th, 2020)

Come and join the vast vault of Afro Cuban Dance and Music left to us by the Maestro, Ranses Shango Aggayu! The multiple layers of intricate body movements in Afro Cuban Dance makes it the perfect study for anyone looking to improve their body movement in many dance genres from Hip-hop to Jazz, from Latin to Modern dance.

Mile High Holidays (Nov. 20th- Jan. 1st, 2021)

Denver comes to life during the winter holiday season, and the festivities kick off on the Friday of Thanksgiving weekend with the City & County Building's and downtown Denver's Grand Illumination – the largest holiday lights display in Denver. As well as the annual lighting of The Mile-High Tree.



Disclaimer: The SSS office recommends that you abide by the CDC's guidelines for preventing the spread of the coronavirus disease. Specifically, the CDC recommends that people wear masks in public settings, at events and gatherings, and anywhere they will be around other people. Be safe.

Alexa Dominguez-Estrella | TRIO SSS Office Assistant

Upcoming Events

CU Denver | Lynx Strong

1ST GEN CELEBRATION WEEK

What does it mean to be a first generation student?

If neither parents have a degree from a four year institution.

KICK-OFF:
MONDAY NOV. 9, 12:00-1:00PM
CLOSING CELEBRATION:
FRIDAY NOV. 13, 1:00-2:00PM

Join us the week of November 9th for a national celebration of your first-generation student success.

.....

Registered students can enter the First-Gen resource hunt. Those who solve it and attend the sessions will earn a custom CU Denver 1st Gen lapel.

.....

Find out how to win a spring 2021 scholarship or a first-gen graduation stole at our closing celebration.

Interested In Attending?
<https://application.admissions.ucdenver.edu/register/?id=770299ec-9ea5-4b2b-bf6c-90b1efaf78c8>

CU DENVER FIRST GENERATION STUDENT WEEK

FIRST-GEN WEEK KICKOFF

Join us to kickoff CU Denver's week-long celebration of first generation students with special guest Valeria Garcia, a graduate of CSU Long Beach and UC Davis, who will share her experience as a first-generation and undocumented student.

**Monday November 9th
1 pM to 2 PM**
[Link to Register in Bio](#)



MARVEL/DC MEET UP CLUB

Assemble to talk about all things Marvel and DC comics! Breakdown movies and trailers together! We'll debate together too! Share your thoughts and theories! To them you're just a geek, like us!

Saturdays @ 3:00 pm

Zoom Link:

<https://ucdenver.zoom.us/j/2584134631>



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!

- 👍 Kili Montgomery won at SACNAS for best Undergraduate Poster Presentation in Chemistry for her poster presentation titled, "Computation of Host-Guest Free Binding Energies with a new, combined QM-MM Mining Minima Algorithm."
- 👍 Kathy Le won the Rising Star Award at D.A.R.E. for her poster presentation titled, "How Does Environmental Temperature Affect Eczema?"
- 👍 Natali Cadena successfully completed her 1st 8-week Business School graduate course!

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



Director's Corner



Dear SSS Students,

I hope that you are well. Fall semester is quickly winding down, and 2021 is around the corner. This year has really flown by. The SSS team has put together a wonderful newsletter full of resources and information. In particular, I invite you to help me welcome Zaira Flores to our team. If you haven't met Zaira, I encourage you to attend her "Yoga at Your Desk and Mindfulness" workshop on November 17th.

As you prepare for finals, please make sure that you utilize the many campus resources that help you perform your best. The Learning Resource Center offers both scheduled tutoring and tutor study sessions – don't wait until the day before your test to seek academic support. Similarly, for those working on final papers, the Writing Center can help you at any stage in your writing process. If you don't have a plan of action for finals, reach out to SSS professional staff and peer mentors – we can help you! Check out Patitta's Study Skills article on page two, which has some great tips. Justin Shrader, SSS Peer Mentor, has a great workshop to help you navigate challenges that might arise when working in teams. I encourage you to attend his session on Monday, November 9th.



Mark your calendars for National First-Gen Day on Sunday, November 8th and CU Denver's First-Gen Week Celebration November 9 – 13th. First-Gen Week gives us an opportunity to recognize the unique experiences of students who are the first in their family to pursue a college education and to celebrate their resilience. Registered students are eligible to enter the First-Gen Resource and Ally Hunt, and those who can solve it earn a custom CU Denver 1st Gen lapel. Students who attend the closing celebration on Friday, November 13th, will learn more information about winning a spring 2021 scholarship or a first-gen graduation stole.





As a program that serves CU Denver's first-gen population, SSS is excited to participate in this week-long celebration. If you are a first-gen SSS student, I encourage you to participate in this great event.

Finally, I want to remind you that about the TRIO SSS Book Scholarship deadline on November 20th. Please make sure to complete your meeting and skill-building workshop requirements by the deadline. You still have time to meet the book scholarship requirements, but please don't wait until the last moment. Also, please take time to complete the SSS Fall Satisfaction Survey. We value your feedback and use it to make our program better. The FA20 Student Satisfaction Survey will go live on Monday, November 2nd at 8 AM and will close on Friday, December 18th at 5 PM. Submit your survey early.

Be safe and be well.

Sonia Valencia
Director, TRIO SSS & McNair

November Workshop Calendar

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
2	3 ¹ Effective Time Management 10:00 am—11:00 am	4	5 ¹ Expressing Yourself 1:00 pm—2:00 pm	6 ² Cultivating Your Talent: Clifton Strengths 11:30 am—1:00 pm
9 ¹ Improve your Communication Skills: Addressing the Slacker in Groups 4:00 pm—5:00 pm 	10  ³ General Study Skills 12:00 pm— 1:00 pm	11 ³ Due Today ≠ Do Today – Avoid Procrastination 10:00 am— 11:00 am ⁴ Wellness & Recreation Financial Literacy : Taking Control Of Your Money 11:00 am—12:00 pm	12  ¹ FAFSA Completion 11:00 am—12:00 pm	13 <i>Never give up</i>
16  ¹ Graduate School Preparation 2:00 pm—3:00 pm	17 ¹ Yoga at Your Desk and Mindfulness 10:00 am—11:00 am ³ Ace My Tests – Test-Taking Skills 12:00 pm— 1:00 pm	18 ³ Wellness & Stress Management 10:00 am— 11:00 am ⁵ Food For Thought Model Minority Myth 12:30 pm — 1:45 pm	19 ¹ Pandemic Talk 10:00 am—11:00 am 	20 FIRST BOOK SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE Don't Miss the DEADLINE!
23 Campus Closed	24 Campus Closed	25 Campus Closed	26 Campus Closed	27 Campus Closed
30	Please note that non-TRIO workshops are subject to change or has limited spaces available. Make sure to fill out the evaluation by using this link: https://bit.ly/2Q4Vwsu .			

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

¹TRIO SSS Skill Building Workshops: Registration Required: RSVP at: <https://bit.ly/303R2bt>

²Career Center Workshop : Registration Required: RSVP at: <https://ucdenver.joinhandshake.com/login>

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

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

⁵Asian American Student Services: Registration Required: RSVP at: <http://tinyurl.com/F4T2020>

***"If you are not willing to learn, No one will help you!
If you are determined to learn, No one can stop you! ~ Unknown***