

# THE PILLAR

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE TRIO SSS COMMUNITY

"Helping Students Realize Their Full Potential"



Summer 2020  
ISSUE

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## Mission Statement

The University of Colorado Denver TRIO Student Support Services Program is a holistic student development program that is dedicated to helping each student reach his or her full academic potential.

## Student Spotlight — Vanessa Viramontes



The TRIO SSS Program is delighted to highlight Vanessa's undergraduate journey. She is an active participant of the program and has graduated with her Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice and a minor in Sociology with certificates in Law Enforcement and Victims & Victim Services. As a first-generation Latina student, her first year was very rough. Vanessa was not prepared for the academics, environment, and independence. Her daily routine was the same every day, which made her mentally exhausted. She then realized that she wanted a better college experience and slowly began to get involved with the university. She found that there were many resources available, which helped make her transition easier. What she liked most about her college experience was securing a job on campus. She worked as a Peer Advocate Leader (PAL) and was able

to work with first year and transfer students who may have felt like a lost student like herself. Mentoring college students during their first semester was amazing.

One thing that Vanessa wished she was told when she started college was that it was okay to have fun. She started school with the mentality that college is only about academics and getting work done. As she got closer to her junior year, she became more involved and had an AMAZING college experience. She wished she had been more involved earlier. A favorite memory she had in college was winning the 2019 Peer Advocate of the Year Award at the Milo Awards. She stated, "Winning such an award was unexpected, but to see that there were people who saw something that I did not. For those that knew me freshman year up to me graduating, they have always said that I have blossomed in ways that I am a better me. My position with PAL allowed me to learn more about myself through the work I've done but also working with the community. I'll truly miss being a PAL, mentoring and building connections with students and staff, but like they say #PALForever."

Vanessa hobbies and interests are basic she stated, "I love to watch horror movies and all things about the criminal justice field. I recently got into cosmetics and have learned how to do lash extensions that takes up most of my time, which is great with what's going on." Another interest of hers is her fishes. She is slowly adding things into her 10-gallon tank so that it looks like a peaceful beach theme.

TO BE CONTINUED....

## Spotlight Continued — Vanessa Viramontes



Like any other student, Vanessa has set some short and long term goals. Her short-term goal is to graduate while making the Dean's List and earning certificates that have to do with Criminal Justice and Social Work related areas. She will continue practicing eye-lash extensions so she can build a business out of it. Vanessa will be redecorating her room and plans to have a healthier lifestyle. As far as her long-term goals, she would like to complete the police academy program. She applied to the Denver Police Department 2020 November Academy, but unfortunately with COVID-19, DPD cancelled the entire academy. Even though she will reapply again in spring 2021, she would eventually like to attend graduate school. Another long-term goal for her is to build her cosmetic business doing lash extensions. She said, "As of now it's all learning and practice."

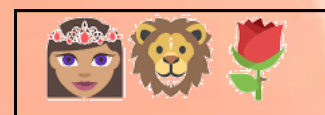
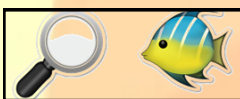
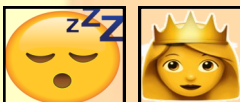
Vanessa was asked how TRIO has helped her and what advice she would give to other TRIO participants. She stated, "TRIO has helped me so much through my entire college journey. In the beginning, I kept to myself and only sought help for academics, but then I became more open and realized they can help beyond academics. It was nice that my mentors allowed me to be open with them and they were interested in my life, career plans and more."

My advice for other TRIO participants is to get involved on campus early, build many connections, make friends, and find many opportunities."

If Vanessa were to win a million dollars, the first thing she would do is buy a big house for her parents. She noted, "With all the struggles they have gone through and I wish could provide them with much more, a roof over their heads is something they would have to worry less about." Vanessa leaves us with her favorite quote; "Let nothing dim the light that shines from within." –Maya Angelou. She noted, "I have had individuals (peers and those in the criminal justice field) try to talk me out of getting a degree in CJ. But remember the degree is for YOU and only YOU. You don't need validation from anyone to study what your passion is. You are the only one putting in the hard work." The TRIO SSS program would like to wish Vanessa luck in her future endeavors.



## Emoji Movie Pictionary



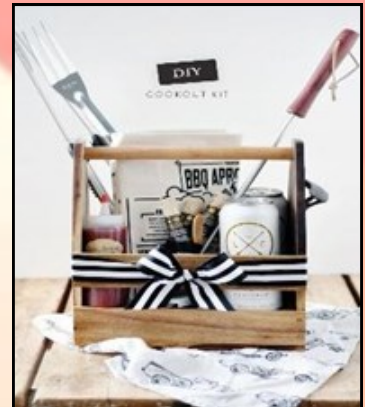


## DIY– Cookout Kit

When it comes to finding Father's Day gift, there are many options out there. Show your father how much you appreciate him by making cookout kit. Dad is going to love his new cookout kit!

### Supplies:

1. A box or vessel of some variety
2. An apron
3. A collection of BBQ smoked sea salts
4. A branding iron
5. A BBQ set
6. 2-3 of his favorite tall cans of beer
7. Small squeeze bottle
8. Homemade ketchup
9. Sticky labels
10. 2-3 of his favorite tall cans of beer
11. Thick black and white ribbon



### Instructions:

1. To begin, unwrap all of the items and discard any stickers or tags (they totally take away from the final look).
2. For a personal touch, open the steak branding iron and add in your own note (mine says "Dig In").
3. Start by tucking the taller items (the BBQ set and branding iron, for example) in the back, and the smaller items in the front. If you find you need a little extra height, scrunch up some kraft paper and place it in the bottom of your beer caddy before you begin.
4. Tie 3-4 of the smoked sea salts together using a simple black ribbon and place them in the front and center
5. Make your homemade ketchup and pour it into your squeeze bottle. Add a homemade label, for a special touch.
6. Tie the entire thing off with a simple black and white ribbon

For more information visit: <http://www.jacquelynclark.com/2016/06/01/fathers-day-diy/>

**Nazik Jameel | TRIO SSS Office Assistant**

## Summer Activities While Quarantined



Although the Coronavirus is keeping us at home for the foreseeable future, there are some activities you can do while in quarantine.

1. Contact a friend you have not talked with for a long time by phone or text message.
2. Do exercises from home since you can not go to the gym. For example, you can do stretching exercises to reduce fatigue and improve your flexibility by using stairs if you have some at home or you can do them using a chair.
3. Read books you have intended to read! Nothing better than reading your favorite novels!
4. Connect with nature: Walk outside in the sunshine, of course at a healthy distance from others.
5. Cook: Turn a wonderful recipe you found on YouTube into reality and make a meal to be proud of. It's a great idea to store pasta, rice, canned vegetables and spices so that more recipes come in handy.
6. Make slime: There's a lot of different ways to make slime but if you're just getting started, you can go on YouTube and look for tutorials that are for beginners
7. Paint: For many people, painting is therapeutic. Spend some time on your artistic talents while also improving yourself mental and emotional health.

**Nazik Jameel | TRIO SSS Office Assistant**

## What is Juneteenth?

Juneteenth is the nationally celebrated day commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. On June 19th, 1865, news from Galveston, Texas declared the war had ended and those enslaved were free. Some know this day as 'Jubilee Day.' Most years, Juneteenth is celebrated by many across the country with music, food, and lively festivities; however, this year, the global pandemic has led to the cancellations of many events; but that does not mean we do not celebrate.



Even though we celebrate the monumental day slavery ended, we must not forget our country's dark history rooted in systemic racism that perpetuates the racial injustices rampant in the United States today. The ongoing protests across not only the United States, but across the globe as well, speaking out against police brutality against black people, is a testament to the work we still have to do in order to dismantle the "racial hierarchy" instilled by our government's racist policies. Even though slavery ended, the black community has been fighting tirelessly for racial equality for 400 years. This year, if Juneteenth's festivities are not as abundant because of the global pandemic, let us celebrate and honor the freedom of slaves by continuing to dismantle the racism still alive in the United States. Let us continue to identify it, describe it, and talk about it. Let us continue the anti-racist movement to bring true equity, equality, and justice to our black family. We can celebrate Jubilee day by living through the words of Ibram X. Kindi, "Being an anti-racist requires persistent self-awareness, constant self-criticism, and regular self-examination."

**Vrajen Patel | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor**

## LGBTQ Pride Month



Every year during the month of June, millions of LGBTQ members and their allies celebrate their lives with color, fervor, and love. Most years, Pride is celebrated with countless parades and festivities, but this year due to the global pandemic, large celebratory gatherings are being cancelled. Many are turning to online celebrations or small groups in the park. In many ways this year, Pride is being celebrated a little bit differently.

Over the past week, protests were organized across the globe marching for racial equity, equality, and justice. Many members of the LGBTQ family urge their fellow community to remember the origins of Pride. This June, we are called to remember

Marsha P. Johnson, a catalyst in the movement for LGBTQ rights. Marsha was a black, trans, bisexual woman who will long be remembered for her advocacy for the LGBTQ community. Marsha is also historically known for her role in the Stonewall uprising, an event that sparked what some call the "Gay Revolution." During this year's Pride month, we must both honor and celebrate the black life that fought inexhaustibly for LGBTQ rights and liberation. People in the United States can freely expressive and celebrate themselves partly due to this woman's brave actions. The Black Lives Matter protests occurring during Pride month are not overshadowing LGBTQ celebrations, because by celebrating one, we are celebrating the other.

**Vrajen Patel | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor**



## Sports During the Pandemic

The global economic slump triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic could change the entire sports industry in ways thought unthinkable till now. Some sports will be hit harder than others. Nearly every sporting event, major and minor, has been canceled, moved or postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic. The question now, to which no one really knows the answer, is when games will come back. The NFL has benefited from the calendar. With the first regular-season game scheduled for Sept. 10, hopes



are high that the season can still be held on time. The league's draft, held from April 23 to 25, was a TV event with no spectators. As the NBA suspended its season on March 11 with teams having played 63 to 67 games of the 82-game season. The NBA Board of Governors approved a competitive format to restart the 2019-20 season with 22 teams returning to play and a tentative start date of July 31. The WNBA season, scheduled to start on May 15, was also postponed, though its draft was held as scheduled April 17. Even with the cancellations and delays of the sport world, most clubs and organizations are preparing to continue their play without the attendance of fans. To imagine sporting events without fans seems like an absurd experience. However, there are rumors that some organizations will allow a certain number of fans to attend following the social distancing guidelines. Also, some organizations are exploring methods to bring fans to the event with virtual reality technology. With all things considered, the sporting world will be altered until there is an active vaccine and or more ensured measures to protect the fans are put in place for the sake of their confidence to attend large sporting events.

**Carlos Guillen | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor**

## Summer Peer Mentors

Welcome to the summer 2020 semester! The TRIO SSS program will be providing mentoring and tutoring throughout the summer session. Vrajen Patel and Carlos Guillen will be available to offer mentoring and tutoring in specific courses. Below, you will find their schedules and courses.



**Carlos Guillen**

[carlos.guillen@ucdenver.edu](mailto:carlos.guillen@ucdenver.edu)

Availability

Monday: 9:00 am – 1:00 pm  
Tuesday: 8:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Wednesday: 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

General Cell Biology, General Biology I & II,  
General Chemistry, Neuropsychology, Abnormal  
Psychology, and Biological Basis of Behavior.



**Vrajen Patel**

[vrajen.patel@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:vrajen.patel@cuanschutz.edu)

Availability

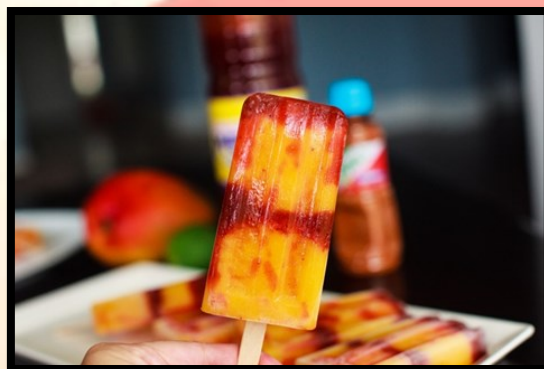
Monday: 10:00 am – 4:30 pm  
Wednesday: 10:00 am – 4:30 pm

Basic Math to Calculus II  
Basic Chemistry to Organic Chemistry  
Basic Biology to Biochemistry  
Physics I and II  
Selected Engineering Courses

## Recipe—Popsicle Mangonadas

### Ingredients

1. 2 Large Mangos or 3 cups of Frozen Mango chunks
2. 1 ½ cups Mango Nectar juice (Jumex)
3. 2 ½ teaspoons of Chamoy
4. Tajin Seasoning
5. Juice from 1 Lime
6. 2 Tablespoons Granulated sugar
7. 10 grid Popsicle mold or 9 oz clear plastic cups
8. Popsicle sticks



### Steps

1. Add the 2 Large mangos (cut in pieces) or the 3 cups of Frozen Mango chunks, add the 1 ½ cups of Mango Nectar, the 2 tbsp of sugar and the Juice from 1 Lime into a blender. Let it blend on high until its very smooth. After blending you will end up with 4 cups!
2. Add 1 ½ tsp of Chamoy into each popsicle mold or into each 9 oz clear plastic cups, drizzle the Chamoy along the edges, so it drips down to bottom and sprinkle a little Tajin.
3. Fill the molds or the clear plastic cups about halfway with the mango mixture, then drizzle another 1 tsp of Chamoy and sprinkle more Tajin.
4. Fill the molds or the clear plastic cups to the top, sprinkle Tajin on top. Then if you are using a mold put the top of it. After that, add the popsicle sticks and Freeze for 5-6 Hours. Enjoy!

Alexa Dominguez-Estrella | TRIO SSS Office Assistant

## Summer Deadlines

- June 8
  - ☆ First Day of summer semester classes
- June 11
  - ☆ Last day to waitlist for summer via UCDAcess
- June 12
  - ☆ Last day to drop without a \$100 drop fee
- June 16
  - ☆ CENSUS DATE-Until 5:00 pm
  - ☆ Last day to request or cancel Grade Forgiveness
  - ☆ Last day to drop summer semester classes with a financial adjustment
  - ☆ Last day to add full term classes via UCDAcess; after today dean's approval is required.
  - ☆ Last day to apply for summer graduation
  - ☆ Last day to petition for a reduction in dissertation hours



Alexa Dominguez-Estrella | TRIO SSS Office Assistant



## Director's Corner



Dear SSS Students,

Resilient. Adaptable. Resourceful. These are a couple of the adjectives I think describe students enrolled in classes last semester. I know the transition to distance learning was not easy, and many of you faced challenges related to virtual learning and the coronavirus pandemic, but you persisted. I encourage you to take a moment to acknowledge and celebrate this accomplishment. If you want to talk about your academic performance, study skills, academic and career goals, or fall enrollment plans, Henry, Daniela, and I are available to meet with you throughout the summer.

You have all been in my thoughts as people around the world take to the streets to demand systemic change and accountability for the continued murder of unarmed Black people in the United States. What we see today is a product of centuries of violence against Black bodies and centuries of pain and frustration. Globally, many of us feel called to action, and this action may take many forms. Some of you may be participating in protests and candle vigils, and I hope that you are doing so in ways that will keep you as safe as possible. Some may not be able to or feel safe participating in public protests, and that is okay. There are many other ways to be part of effecting systemic change. It may seem small, but educating ourselves on our own implicit biases and the historical legacy of racism can have a profound effect. I should note that this kind of education isn't one that can be accomplished in a day, weekend, or a semester. Thus, I urge you to be patient with yourself and to allow room for you to pose questions and even make mistakes. Yes, mistakes. Find reputable sources of educational content in the form of articles, books, podcasts, or films to help you understand the nuanced meaning of concepts we keep seeing in articles and speeches—terms like implicit bias, antiracist, privilege, and defunding the police.

As an avid reader and film lover, I would like to share a couple of books and movies I am reading and watching to help me become a better ally and better understand what is happening. I'm currently making my way through *How to be Antiracist* by Ibram X Kendi and *White Fragility* by Robin Diangelo. The *New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander and *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates are accessible, informative, and eye-opening reads. The PBS documentary *Slavery by Another Name* is a transformative film that I have often used in my courses. *Mercy* (2019), *13th* (2016), and *I Am Not Your Negro* (2017) are widely accessible films that generate great questions and can start fruitful dialogues. Also, CU Denver's Office of Diversity and Inclusion is hosting monthly justice seminars that I hope you'll consider joining. If you need direction finding educational resources, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Finally, I encourage you to take care of yourself. The convergence of the 24-hour news cycle and multiple social media platforms means we are inundated with informative articles, opinion pieces, and violent visual content, all against the backdrop of a global pandemic. Sometimes this information overload can feel overwhelming. Consequently, I urge you to practice self-care. Whether you are taking summer courses, working, or taking a break, I hope you will carve out time for activities that bring you joy and help you re-charge. Again, please remember that the SSS team is available for meetings all summer long. Be well and take care of yourselves.

Sonia Valencia, TRIO Director

## Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month



June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness month, a time for people of all ages to get involved in the fight against the disease. Everyone who has a brain is at risk of developing Alzheimer's disease. There are approximately 50 million people worldwide living with Alzheimer's and other dementias. Alzheimer's is not part of the normal aging process. It is a fatal disease that progressively kills nerve cells in the brain and affects an individual's memory and cognitive functioning. In June, the Alzheimer's Association raises awareness of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias during Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month.

Through fundraising events and media campaigns and across social media platforms. The organization aims to increase public awareness of Alzheimer's disease, help families facing the disease learn more about available resources, and encourage people to get involved to support the cause. Purple is the official color of the Alzheimer's Association, and throughout June, people around the world wear purple to raise awareness and help fight Alzheimer's. Purple clothing and accessories are available through the organization's website. Spread the word about the importance of brain health. Together, we can make a difference with awareness and action.

**Carlos Guillen | TRIO SSS Peer Mentor**

## June Workshop Calendar

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu
<b>15</b> <sup>1</sup> Study Strategies for Remote Learning 101 10:00 am — 11:00 am	<b>16</b> <sup>1</sup> Study Strategies for Remote Learning 101 12:00 pm — 1:00 pm	<b>17</b> <sup>2</sup> TRIO SSS 5-Myths About Applying to Graduate School & How to Find Fully-funded Graduate Programs 4:00 pm — 5:00 pm	<b>18</b> <sup>2</sup> TRIO SSS Now or Later? Procrastination 12:00 pm — 1:00 pm
<b>22</b> <sup>1</sup> Avoiding the All-Nighters 10:00 am — 11:00 am	<b>23</b> <sup>1</sup> Avoiding the All-Nighters 12:00 pm — 1:00 pm	<b>24</b> <sup>2</sup> TRIO SSS Stress Management Made Simple! Coping with Stress 1:00 pm — 2:00 pm	<b>25</b> <sup>3</sup> TRIO SSS Financial Literacy: Managing Your Finances 11:00 am — 12:00 pm
<b>29</b> <sup>1</sup> Thrive vs. Survive 10:00 am — 11:00 am	<b>30</b> <sup>1</sup> Thrive vs. Survive 12:00 pm — 1:00 pm	<b>REGISTRATION REQUIRED</b> ALL Skill Building and Financial Literacy workshops will be held via ZOOM Meeting. Once you register, you will be emailed the zoom meeting information.	

## July Workshop Calendar

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu
<i>It's perfectly okay to admit you're not okay.</i>		<b>1</b> <sup>2</sup> TRIO SSS Make Things Happen! Motivation and Goal Setting 3:00 pm — 4:00 pm	<b>2</b> <sup>2</sup> TRIO SSS Applying to Competitive Scholarships and Fellowships: Get Setup for Success 11:00 am — 12:00 pm
<b>6</b> <sup>2</sup> TRIO SSS Stress Management 11:00 am — 12:00 pm	<b>7</b> <sup>2</sup> TRIO SSS Now or Later? Procrastination 11:00 am — 12:00 pm	<b>8</b> <sup>2</sup> TRIO SSS Tips for Graduate School That You Absolutely Can't Miss! Graduate School Preparation 11:00 am — 12:00 pm	<b>9</b> <sup>2</sup> TRIO SSS Professional Development: Effective Networking 2:00 pm — 3:00 pm
<b>13</b> <sup>1</sup> LRC <sup>1</sup> Tips for Online Exams And Quizzes 10:00 am — 11:00 am	<b>14</b> <sup>1</sup> LRC <sup>1</sup> Tips for Online Exams And Quizzes 12:00 pm — 1:00 pm	<b>15</b> <sup>3</sup> TRIO SSS Financial Literacy: Managing Your Finances 1:00 pm — 2:00 pm	<b>16</b> <sup>2</sup> TRIO SSS Beginners Guide: Resume Basics 11:00 am — 12:00 pm
<b>20</b> <sup>1</sup> LRC <sup>1</sup> Calming Test Anxiety 10:00 am — 11:00 am	<b>21</b> <sup>1</sup> LRC <sup>1</sup> Calming Test Anxiety 12:00 pm — 1:00 pm	<b>22</b> <sup>3</sup> TRIO SSS Financial Literacy: Budgeting Basics 12:00 pm — 1:00 pm	<b>23</b> <sup>2</sup> TRIO SSS Little Known Ways to Balance School, Work, and Family 12:00 pm — 1:00 pm

REGISTRATION REQUIRED — \*Non-TRiO workshops are subject to change.

<sup>1</sup>Learning Resources Center Academic Development Workshops

✓ Registration Required: RSVP at: [https://forms.ucdenver.edu/secure/sa\\_lrc\\_academic\\_development\\_workshop](https://forms.ucdenver.edu/secure/sa_lrc_academic_development_workshop)

<sup>2</sup>TRIO SSS Skill Building Workshops

✓ Registration Required: RSVP at: <https://bit.ly/3cCue5j>

<sup>3</sup>TRIO SSS Financial Literacy Workshops

✓ Registration Required: RSVP at: <https://bit.ly/3gUswQk>

*small steps  
every day*