

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### COUNCIL FOR OPPORTUNITY IN EDUCATION HIRES ZACH FARMER TO SERVE AS DIRECTOR OF CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS

**Washington, D.C. (December 14, 2021)** — The nonprofit [Council for Opportunity in Education](#) (COE), which advances opportunities for low-income and first-generation students to enroll and graduate from college—particularly those served by the [Federal TRIO Programs](#)—has hired Zach Farmer as its Director of Congressional Affairs. In this role, Farmer will advocate before Members of Congress, the Department of Education, and the White House to advance the interests of the Council, TRIO programs, and TRIO students.

Farmer, a first-generation college graduate of High Point University, joins COE from the office of **U.S. Representative Warren Davidson (R-OH)**, where he covered education, veterans, and other legislative issues. While on Congressman Davidson’s staff, Farmer worked alongside TRIO Caucus Co-Chairs **Representative Gwen Moore (D-WI)**, and **Senators Susan Collins (R-ME)**, and **Jon Tester (D-MT)** to introduce the [Educational Opportunity and Success Act](#), which would make bipartisan, common-sense updates to the federal TRIO programs.

“With his broad, bipartisan experience in Congress, work with HBCUs, and his achievements as a first-generation college student, Zach brings new, pertinent strength to our public policy office. We’re excited to have him on board as we start a new year,” said **COE President Maureen Hoyler**.

Before his time in Representative Davidson’s office, Farmer worked for **U.S. Representative Mark Walker (R-NC)**, where he helped coordinate a bipartisan internship program for students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) with Congressional Bipartisan HBCU Caucus Co-Chair **U.S. Representative Alma Adams (D-NC)**. While with Representative Walker, he assisted with the HBCU annual fly-in Congressional Advocacy Day and efforts to provide long-term HBCU funding.

“Zach has worked hard to advance the cause of first-generation students, starting with his personal experience. We’re thrilled that he’s joining our team to continue the important bipartisan work of advancing opportunities for our country’s low-income, first-generation college students,” said **Jonathan Elkin, Vice President for Public Policy at COE**.

In the fiscal year 2022, the TRIO community is asking Congress to support a robust funding increase, to ultimately serve at least a million students annually. TRIO garners support across a broad political spectrum as programs assisting students continue to emerge in nearly every Congressional District.

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*The Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) is a nonprofit organization established in 1981 dedicated to furthering college opportunities for low-income, first-generation students and students with disabilities. Through its numerous membership services, the Council works in conjunction with colleges, universities, and agencies that host Federal TRIO Programs that help nearly 809,000 low-income students and students with disabilities each year receive college access and retention services.*