

# EQUALITY



COE's 2023 Keith Sherin Global Leaders Study Abroad Program was more than just a trip to the Netherlands—it was a life-altering journey that left an indelible mark on 18 TRIO college students.

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## STUDENT OPPORTUNITY **2023 Study Abroad Experience in the Netherlands Empowers Global Leaders for Positive Change**

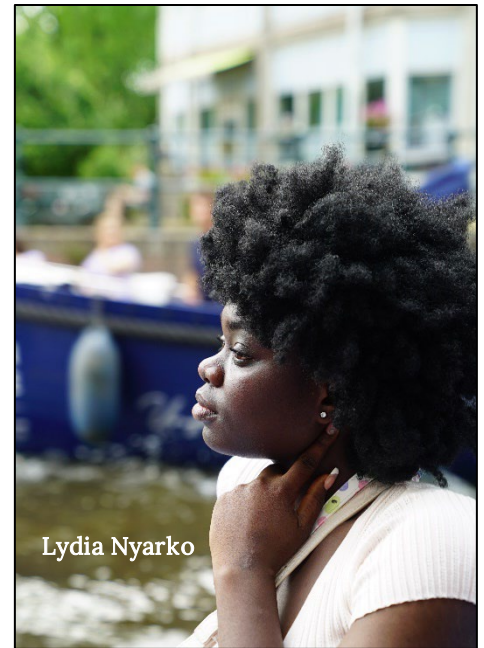
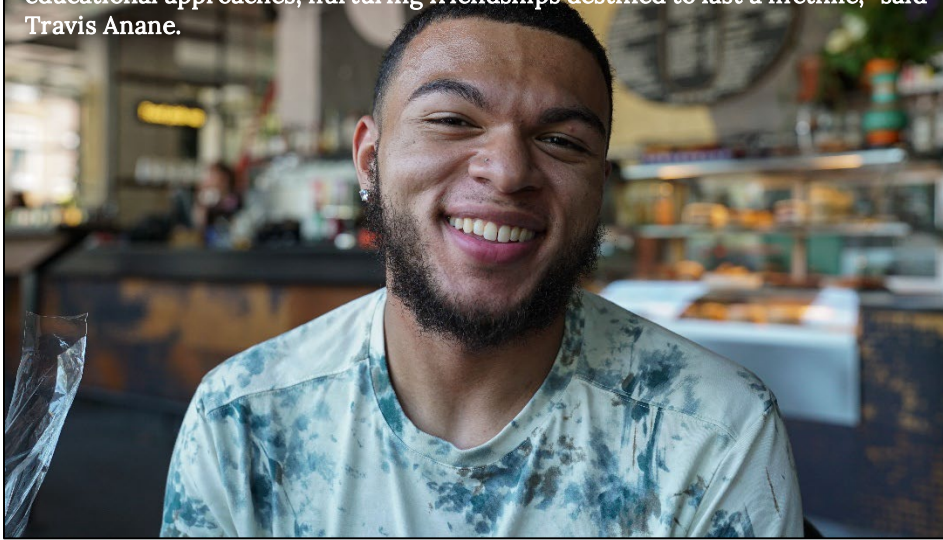
COE's 2023 Keith Sherin Global Leaders Study Abroad Program in the Netherlands was a life-altering journey for 18 TRIO college students. Beyond a mere trip, this experience fostered a global perspective and essential leadership skills. The initiative aimed to empower these future leaders, enabling them to positively impact their communities and the world.



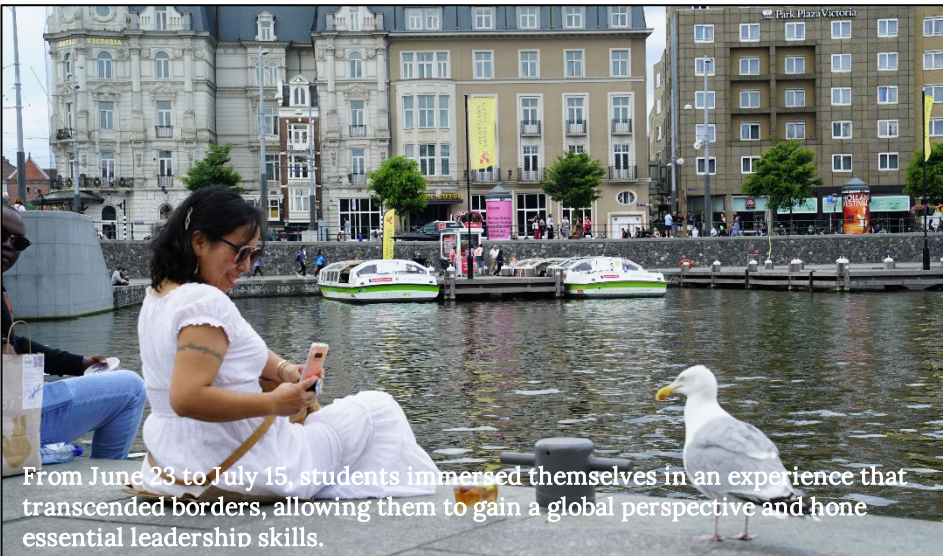
"The experience reshaped my perspective on education, revealing the boundless knowledge beyond traditional classrooms," said Daniela Valdivia-Terres.



“Engaging in storytelling sessions with students from Italy, Germany, France, and other countries enriched my understanding of different lifestyles and educational approaches, nurturing friendships destined to last a lifetime,” said Travis Anane.



Lydia Nyarko



From June 23 to July 15, students immersed themselves in an experience that transcended borders, allowing them to gain a global perspective and hone essential leadership skills.

*Cont'd from the front:*

For **Weber State University's Norlito Sanchez, Jr.**, financial assistance and tailored support systems were vital to making study abroad accessible. Scholarships, grants, and money management workshops paved the way for his unforgettable experience. Interacting with fellow students and locals in the Netherlands broadened his understanding of diverse cultures, fostering empathy and inclusivity.

**Travis Anane from Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey**, discovered the power of storytelling and its ability to forge lasting connections. His newfound appreciation for diverse lifestyles and cross-cultural communication propelled him to pursue multilingual skills for global connections and shared stories.

Studying abroad was an eye-opening adventure for **Daniela Valdivia-Terres**, a **Northern Essex Community College** student. Beyond traditional



“Scholarships, grants, and funding should be readily available to make study abroad dreams a reality,” said **Norlito Sanchez, Jr.**

classrooms, she learned through real-world experiences, interacting with residents and embracing sustainable entrepreneurial thinking. Her journey strengthened her human approach to community work and enriched her understanding of the interconnected world.





Jillian Antalosky

STUDENT OPPORTUNITY  
**Annual National Student Leadership Congress Empowers High School TRIO Students to Overcome Challenges and Embrace Opportunities for Success**

One hundred thirty-nine high school TRIO students from across the country gathered in Washington, D.C., this June for COE's 34<sup>th</sup> Annual National Student Leadership Congress (NSLC). During this event, they immersed themselves in storytelling, forged new friendships, and embraced their TRIO pride. These students engaged with Members of Congress, toured historical landmarks, and debated solutions to pressing societal issues. The experience proved transformative, providing them with invaluable insights and



The students followed a robust itinerary. They toured historical landmarks, met admissions officers at a selective college fair, and celebrated their cross-sectional identities as members of TRIO.



Students from Utah pose for a photograph with Senator Mitt Romney (R-UT).

opportunities they had never imagined.  
**Madison Bollin**, a sophomore from Dallas, Texas, expressed a desire for even more integration among student groups, recognizing the power of such experiences in educating students about unique challenges and education inequalities in each state. For **Zayden Reffitt**, a rising senior from Iowa, the journey was life-changing, providing a new outlook on the world and a pathway to Iowa State University where he desires to pursue agriculture education. Meanwhile, **Riley Handley**, a rising junior from West Virginia,

aspires to attend prestigious institutions like Yale or Columbia for psychology but faces challenges due to her hometown's lack of resources. She advocated for higher education access programs during a conversation with Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), emphasizing the importance of identifying and supporting students in need.  
 Despite their diverse backgrounds and aspirations, all participants in the NSLC shared a common determination to seize opportunities and overcome obstacles on their paths to success.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

## Empowering Success: How TRIO Transformed My Journey and Fueled My Passion as a University Recruiter



By Luis Carrillo-Rodriguez

TRIO taught me that it all starts with people—something I witnessed firsthand in TRIO Student Support Services (SSS). This safe space allowed authentic vulnerability, and their selfless philosophy filled my heart with gratitude. As a university recruiter, I carry the same spirit of service, connecting students to opportunities to ensure success.

TRIO SSS was instrumental in helping me plot a route through the challenges of pursuing a college degree, providing a map to navigate academia, and coaching me on interviewing skills. Their investments had a ripple effect, leading to various job opportunities and an extensive network that advanced my career as a professional.

Being a TRIO advisor for COE's National Student Leadership Congress revealed TRIO's profound ability to inspire action at the national level. TRIO students are super talented and

play a significant role in preparing the next generation of innovators to take on challenges.

As a first-generation student, TRIO instilled a sense of pride and a unique perspective to question the status quo. Now at Idaho National Laboratory, I aim to expand access and opportunities for incredible professional experiences.

The cohort model in TRIO creates a wealth of social and aspirational capital, and I continue to learn from outstanding TRIO faculty and my alumni peers. I encourage recent TRIO graduates to leverage the vast TRIO alumni network for support and to pay it forward by advocating for TRIO students. Planting the TRIO seed and watching it flourish in other environments is a testament to the power and impact of TRIO.

*Luis Carrillo-Rodriguez currently works as a University Recruiter for Idaho National Laboratory.*

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## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

## Unveiling My Path from Pre-Med to Epidemiology: A Journey of Passion and Purpose in Public Health



By Carlin D. Nelson, Ph.D., MPH, CPH, CHES

From the beginning, I knew my passion for helping people and my love for science and math would lead me to pursue a major in natural science with a pre-med track. However, an unexpected change in my course selections during my sophomore year introduced me to the field of public health. This eye-opening experience revealed the power of

epidemiology in understanding population health, guiding me to specialize in investigating substance abuse and racial stressors' impact on health behaviors and outcomes. Networking and building relationships with classmates, professors, and mentors were crucial in shaping my professional journey, opening doors to opportunities like working with the Office of Minority Health at the National Institute of Health for ten years.

Beyond my major, my minors in chemistry and sociology provided unique insights into my work as an epidemiologist. Understanding the population and developing tailored interventions became my forte, contributing to the success of various projects and initiatives. Despite challenges with imposter syndrome, I embraced the support system at the College of Charleston's TRIO program, realizing that it wasn't about

inadequacy but acknowledging systemic inequities and devising a plan to thrive in my studies.

Completing internships and fellowships exposed me to real-world applications, where I conducted research, published scientific work, and gained valuable experience in communication and social change. Witnessing experienced professionals navigating challenges and striving for health equity inspired me to focus on bridging the gap between assessment and policy development. As I earned my terminal degree, I remained determined to create data-driven, tailored, and sustainable interventions that promote health equity and make public health the impactful field it should be.

*Carlin Nelson is currently an epidemiologist at the Drug Enforcement Administration.*

# WE WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOU

UPDATE YOUR TRIO ALUMNI PROFILE AT [TRIOALUMNI.ORG](https://trioalumni.org)

FROM THE PELL INSTITUTE  
**Pell Institute Receives  
 \$250,000 Grant from  
 Lumina Foundation for  
 Groundbreaking Research  
 Project on Postsecondary  
 Credential Perceptions**

In collaboration with the University of California, Berkeley, the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education will explore the perceptions of Black, Latinx, and Indigenous learners regarding the value of postsecondary credentials. This comprehensive research will shed light on the unique experiences, challenges, and opportunities these communities face pursuing higher education.

**Terry Vaughan III**, vice president of research at COE and director of the Pell Institute, expressed deep gratitude for the foundation's support, emphasizing the significance of understanding the factors that shape perceptions among marginalized learners. COE President **Maureen Hoyler** highlighted the importance of collaboration in improving enrollment and graduation rates for students of color.

The project's findings, presented in a comprehensive report and a webinar, will serve as invaluable resources for admissions offices, fostering dialogue and inspiring collaborative efforts to create a more equitable postsecondary education landscape for all learners.



The conference consists of formal research presentations and panel discussions covering a range of student financial aid and higher education finance topics.



## Photos from the Student Financial Aid Research Network 2023

The Student Financial Aid Research Network (SFARN) Conference is a leading space for researchers and practitioners to network, seek input, and share expertise with colleagues from colleges and universities, state and federal agencies, membership associations, and other non-profit organizations. In July, this year's conference consisted of formal research presentations and panel discussions covering federal policy changes, student loan debt, higher education access,



The 2023 conference was hosted at the State University of New Jersey Rutgers.

and how students and their families pay for college.



## CAREER PATHWAYS

## Boost Your Graduates' Earning Potential with Paid Internships and Entry-Level Career Opportunities

Did you know bachelor's degree recipients who had a paid internship while in college earned an average of \$4,755 more one year after graduation than those who did not? COE's TRIO Career Development Program (TCDP) offers your students access to competitive paid internships and jobs. TCDP builds your students' professional skills, supports their development through mentoring, connects them to careers with top employers, and helps them maximize their work experience. Currently, over 100 TRIO undergraduates are participating in the first cohort. They receive personalized mentoring and tools

to develop and execute their career plans. After building valuable relationships, these students will be prepared to compete for highly sought-after positions with various public and private sector partners this fall.

### TCDP PROVIDES TRIO SSS AND MCNAIR STUDENTS WITH:

- Targeted, intentional coaching from Career Development Mentors
- Supplemental skill development opportunities (virtual, self-paced) to obtain the skills employers demand.
- Connections to paid internships, career acceleration programs (CAP), and other full-time employment opportunities.
- Access to COE's digital platform for career exploration, mentor engagement, assessment and skill development, and talent recruitment

- COE endorsement of students who complete the program and referrals to internship and employment opportunities.

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Internship Applicants: 2.5+ GPA and on track to complete 60-90 credits by **June 2025**
- Career Acceleration Program (CAP) Applicants: completed a bachelor's degree by **June 2025** in a field of study related to the CAP of interest; GPA of 3.0+
- Full-time Job Applicants: 2.5+ GPA at graduation by **June 2024**

Let COE's TRIO Career Development Program help your students begin their career journeys today. Email **Tommy Walls** at [tommy.walls@coenet.org](mailto:tommy.walls@coenet.org) for more information before applications for the next cohort open in spring 2024.



# WE'RE HIRING!

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## LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

## From TRIO Upward Bound to Capitol Hill: How Washington, D.C. Ignited My Career



By Anthony M. Mitchell

In Washington, D.C., building meaningful relationships with people, especially those with similar values, ideas, lived experiences, or perspectives, has benefitted me.

As an alumnus of the **Southern University A&M College** TRIO

**Upward Bound** program, I was ready to step onto the **Penn State University** campus and fully leverage all available resources and opportunities. I grew up in **New Orleans** and spent most of my pre-college life in Louisiana, so attending college in Pennsylvania was a pivotal moment that set me on an accelerated trajectory.

Participating in TRIO and graduating created fresh pathways for me in D.C. I relocated to D.C. from Pennsylvania with political science, communication arts and sciences, and civic and community engagement degrees. These credentials enabled me to succeed during my time on Capitol Hill (in the U.S. House and the Senate) and my service in the executive office of **D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser**.

I've written legislation, press releases, talking points, and

speeches for multiple Members of Congress, managed vital relationships and community partnerships for the mayor of the nation's capital, and even guided long-term public policy strategy and development as a senior-level government affairs professional.

In D.C., I have found invaluable connections through my involvement with networks here - including the **Congressional Black Caucus Foundation**, the Aspen Institute, Alpha Phi Alpha, Wilson Center's Foreign Policy Fellowship Program, and many more. My time in college has been an investment that has paid off in every phase of my career and has fortunately created a stable foundation for my current life in D.C.

*Anthony Mitchell is a senior manager for transit and micro-mobility policy at Lyft.*

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