

# OUR HISTORY



## The TRIO Community Introduced The Concept Of The “First-Generation College Student.”

In the late 1970s, as Congress prepared to reauthorize the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA), TRIO leaders nationwide sought to unify the admission criteria for the programs. Until then, each program had different eligibility criteria, ranging from “rurally isolated” to “culturally disadvantaged.” A working group called the National Coordinating Council of Educational Opportunity Associations – the pre-cursor to the Council for Opportunity in Education – introduced the idea of the “first-generation college student” as a universal criterion for admission to the TRIO programs during the hearings leading up to 1980 HEA reauthorization.

## The Term “First-Generation College Student” Was First Codified Into Law In The TRIO Section Of The Higher Education Act.

Following the recommendations of TRIO leaders, the 1980 HEA reauthorization included language in the TRIO section defining a “first-generation college student” as “an individual... whose parents did not complete a baccalaureate degree.” (20 U.S.C. Sec. 1070a-11(h)(3) (The definition goes on to state that, “[i]n the case of an individual who regularly resided with and received support from only one parent, an individual whose only such parent did not complete a baccalaureate degree.”)



## COE Partnered With NASPA's Center For First-Generation Success In 2017 To Launch The First National First-Generation College Celebration.

To amplify the experience and the accomplishments of first-generation college students on campus, COE joined NASPA's Center for First-generation Success to launch the National First-Generation College Celebration Day. Since 2017, campuses across the country have marked this event on November 8, the anniversary of the signing of the Higher Education Act of 1965. In recent years, this event has grown to include weeklong celebrations that include not only first-generation undergraduates but first-generation graduate students as well.

*The Council for Opportunity in Education’s mission is to achieve college access and success for low-income students, first-generation students, and students with disabilities.*



COUNCIL *for* OPPORTUNITY *in* EDUCATION

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For more information, visit [coenet.org](http://coenet.org).



# 1964 2024

# CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF TRIO

*Commemorative Timeline*



For more information, visit [coenet.org](http://coenet.org).



## 1964

In his first State of the Union address, President Lyndon Baines Johnson declares "War on Poverty." Later that year, he signs the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 into law. This legislation establishes the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity ("OEO"), an independent agency that generates many new social welfare programs, including Jobs Corps, Head Start, and a college-preparatory demonstration project called Upward Bound.



**TRIO**  
UPWARD BOUND



## 1966

The U.S. Office of Education, which operates out of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (now the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) administers the first 42 Talent Search projects at \$2 million serving approximately 50,000 students.



**TRIO**  
VETERANS UPWARD BOUND

**TRIO**  
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS

## 1970

The Office of Education administers the first 118 Special Services for Disadvantaged Students projects at \$10 million to serve 30,000 students.

## 1972

In the 1972 HEA reauthorization, Congress creates the fourth TRIO program – Educational Opportunity Centers ("EOCs") – to provide counseling and information on college admissions to adults who want to enter or continue a program of postsecondary education.

Also, under the Upward Bound authority, the Office of Education administers the first Veterans Upward Bound grants to address the needs of servicemen returning home from the Vietnam War.

GA  
CLARK ATLANTA  
UNIVERSITY



## 1978

Atlanta University receives the first TRIO Staff Development grant for \$2 million.

## 1979

The Department of Education Organization Act dismantles the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and establishes a cabinet level U.S. Department of Education. TRIO programs were transferred to the new Department's Office of Postsecondary Education, Division of Student Services.

## 1986

In response to the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Deficit Reduction Act, which mandates an across-the-board cut to government funding, Congress proclaims February 28, 1986 as "National TRIO Day" (H. Con. Res. 278) to highlight the needs and accomplishments of TRIO students and programs. Subsequently, National TRIO Day is celebrated annually on the last Saturday of each February.

In the 1986 HEA reauthorization, Congress creates a fifth TRIO program - the "Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program" - to prepare low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented students to pursue doctoral study.

**TRIO**  
RONALD E. MCNAIR  
POST-BACCALAUREATE  
ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM



## 1987

In the technical amendments to the 1896 reauthorization, Congress renames the newest TRIO program as the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program.

**TRIO**  
UPWARD BOUND MATH-SCIENCE



## 2004

The Congressional TRIO Caucus organizes its first briefing on Capitol Hill.

## 2005

The TRIO community defeats the White House's attempt to eliminate Upward Bound, Talent Search, and GEAR UP.



## 2007

In the College Cost Reduction and Access Act, the TRIO community secures \$228 million (over four years) to fund 200 additional Upward Bound projects in that year's grant competition.

UPWARD BOUND  
50 YEARS  
1964-2014

## 2014

Upward Bound celebrates 50 years of service.

FIRST-GENERATION  
COLLEGE CELEBRATION  
#CelebrateFirstGen

## 2017

The TRIO community defeats an amendment to revoke \$60 million from TRIO by a House floor vote of 153-263.

The TRIO community co-hosts the first National First-Generation College Celebration Day on November 8, to commemorate the signing of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

50 YEARS  
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS  
1967-2017

50 YEARS  
VETERANS UPWARD BOUND  
1968-2018

## 2022

Educational Opportunity Centers and Veterans Upward Bound celebrate 50 years of service.

1960s

1970s

1980s

1990s

2000s

2010s

TODAY

## 1965

In the summer of 1965, the first cohort of Upward Bound students participate in summer programs hosted by 17 various institutions. Of the 2,061 students participating in Upward Bound in the summer of 1965, 80 percent would be admitted to college for the fall of 1965, and 69 percent of those freshmen would go on to graduate from college.

- Columbia University
- Dillard University
- Fisk University
- Florida A&M University
- Howard University
- Independent Schools Talent Search Program
- LeMoyne College
- Morehouse College
- New Mexico Highlands University
- New York University
- Ripon College
- Tennessee State University
- Texas Southern University
- University of Oregon
- University of the Ozarks
- Webster University
- Western Washington State College

On November 8, that same year, President Johnson signs the Higher Education Act of 1965 ("HEA"), which authorized a new program called Talent Search to identify "exceptionally talented, exceptionally needy" students.

**TRIO**  
TALENT SEARCH

## 1968

In the first reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, Congress transfers management of Upward Bound from the Office of Economic Opportunity to the Office of Education. Congress also creates a new program for undergraduates: Special Services for Disadvantaged Students (now known as Student Support Services). Together with Talent Search, these three programs are known informally as "the TRIO programs."

## 1974

The first 12 EOCs begin to operate with \$3 million in funding to serve 30,000 clients.

## 1976

In the 1976 HEA reauthorization, Congress creates the TRIO Staff Training Program (i.e., TRIO Training Grants).

Shirley Chisholm (D-NY), the first African-American woman to serve in the U.S. Congress, adopts TRIO as cause and assists the TRIO community in advancing its interests.



## 1980

In the 1980 HEA reauthorization, Congress standardizes eligibility across all TRIO programs to include those from low-income backgrounds and/or who are potential "first-generation college students."



## 1989

*With \$1.5 million, the first 14 McNair Programs support 600 students. The host institutions were:*

- American University
- Bowie State University
- California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo
- CUNY-John Jay
- Marquette University
- North Carolina A&T University
- Oberlin University
- Rutgers University
- SUNY at Buffalo
- University of Illinois at Urbana
- University of Maine
- University of Maryland—College Park
- University of Massachusetts—Boston
- Wesleyan University



## 1995

In what would be known as the "War on Opportunity," the TRIO community defeats a proposal by the House Budget Committee to eliminate TRIO.



## 2006

The TRIO community defeats a renewed attempt by the Administration to eliminate Upward Bound, Talent Search, and GEAR UP.



## 2008

In the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, the TRIO community defeats the unethical evaluation of the Upward Bound program, establishes a formal appeals process for TRIO grant applicants, and wins five-year grant terms for all projects.



50 YEARS  
TALENT SEARCH  
A Federal TRIO Program  
1965-2015

## 2015

Talent Search celebrates 50 years of service.

TRIO 55TH  
ANNIVERSARY  
1968-2018

## 2018

TRIO funding cracks the \$1 billion threshold for the first time in its history.

Student Support Services celebrates 50 years of service.

## 2024

Serving nearly 880,000 students across the United States and its territories, TRIO celebrates its 60th anniversary.